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CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZI

June | July 2008

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CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

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A friend of Canadian history

DEBORAH MORRISON

Jerry Zucker (second from left) poses with former History Society board members and representatives of the Manitoba Archives during his first meeting as chair of the Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation in April 2006.

Only in exceptional cases has *The Beaver* written about non-Canadians in its pages — but Jerry Zucker was an exceptional man.

Jerry Zucker was the American who took over the Hudson's Bay Company, becoming governor of Hbc, chair of the Hbc History Foundation, and later a board member of Canada's National History Society. I first met him on April 12, 2006 — two years to the day before his passing. It was an important meeting; Hbc, our largest contributor, had in recent years been reducing its annual support to us. I had all the trepidation you'd expect me to have about the new American ownership's likely interest in supporting a small charity devoted to celebrating Canada's history.

I needed not to have worried. Within the first fifteen minutes of the meeting, he gently suggested he fully appreciated why we were doing what we did, but wanted to focus more on what results we hoped to achieve. What followed was an hour-long dialogue of ideas and possibilities. We ended it with more funding than we came for and two new projects to realize — a French edition for *Kayak* and a new local grants program to support community-based efforts to celebrate Canada's stories.

Jerry Zucker recognized that he acquired more than a company when he bought The Bay. He was deeply committed to building upon Hbc's historic legacy, both corporately and philanthropically. Always encouraging, he inspired us to work harder and to be better.

In this issue's History Matters we have great stories that underscore just how far we've come. Although the History Society staff and volunteer board members deserve the full credit for these achievements, we benefitted greatly from Jerry Zucker's leadership and generosity.

We've lost someone who may have seemed an improbable ally, but was truly a remarkable friend of Canadian history.

Deborah Morrison
Publisher, President and CEO
Canada's National History Society

COVER: CANADIAN PRESS, PICTURE RETOUCHED BY MICHEL GROLEAU

"... we have reason to hope the delegates of Canada will join us in Congress and complete the American Union..."
— Thomas Jefferson, future president of the United States, 1774.
CANADA
MOTHER BRITANNIA.—" See ! Why, the dear child can stand alone
UNCLE SAM.—" Of course he can ! Let go of him Granny ; if he fal

MCCORD MUSEUM/M988.182.145

Canada, ink on newsprint-leggotype by anonymous, July 23, 1870.

The Beaver

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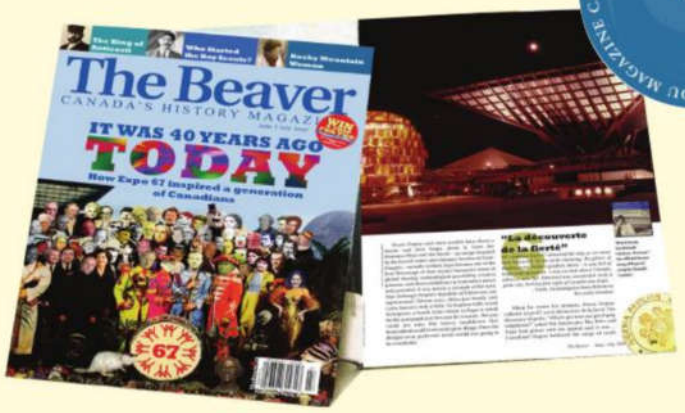

The Beaver: Canada's History Magazine is pleased to announce it has earned a nomination for a prestigious National Magazine Award.

The nomination, which comes in the Words & Pictures category, is for the feature "An Expo 67 Kaleidoscope" from our June/July 2007 issue.

The Words & Pictures category is special, because it honours not just the writing or the design of the article, but the fusion of the two elements into a cohesive, entertaining and artistic package for readers.

In the article, Christopher Moore — the long-time columnist for *The Beaver* — recounts how Canada came of age in the groovy streets of Montreal during that city's world fair in 1967. Drawing on both personal reflection and the reminiscences of other Canadians, Moore brings to life those heady days of the late 1960s — a time of optimism and hope for most Canadians.

Art Director Michel Groleau's inspired interpretation of Moore's article both compliments and enhances the buoyant atmosphere of the story. From his innovative and cheeky cover — a takeoff of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* featuring a host of famous Canadians from our past — to his skilled use of colour, images and numbers in the body of the text, Groleau's design invites readers to relive their own Expo experience through this story.

The National Magazine Award is Canada's premiere award for excellence in the magazine industry. Gold, Silver and Honourable Mention awards will be announced at a special ceremony in Toronto in June. We at *The Beaver* and Canada's National History Society wish Christopher, Michel and former editor Doug Whiteway the best of luck, and congratulations on their well–deserved honour.

Hidden history

"Neighbourhood Lost" [April/May 2008] was a fascinating article, as I was totally unaware of Hogan's Alley. I was living in Vancouver's suburbs at the time, from 1966 through 1976, during my pre-teen and teen years and was never aware of this rich part of the city's history.

Never once was it mentioned in junior or senior high and I don't recall any of my relatives talking about it. I distinctly remember the construction in the area prior to the building of the Georgia Street Viaduct, but nothing else. Thank goodness your magazine exists to bring this forgotten history to light.

ED MOORE
EDSON, ALBERTA

All in the family

How fitting that my first issue should be this special collector's edition ["Quebec at 400," February/March 2008]. It will be treasured as an addition to our family heritage.

Regarding the wonderful article on the filles du roi, I might add that it is not only Quebecers who are able to trace their ancestry to the filles du roi. Both my late husband and I, though two or more generations removed from Quebec, are able to trace our ancestry to the 1660s, when our direct filles du roi ancestors arrived from France. It's an ancestry of which we are intensely proud.

Also, I, on my father's side, claim an ancestor who fought in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. Thank you. I look forward to future issues.

VIRGINIA NOEL/CHEVALIER
LONDON, ONTARIO

Praising *Le Beaver*

Since the early 1950s, I have been a loyal *Beaver* reader and often refer people to the magazine. Every year, we find great pleasure in giving a *Beaver* subscription as a gift to others.

Recently, while in Quebec City, I had the opportunity to meet Mr. Jean Charest, premier of Quebec. At that time I presented him with the newest edition of the French-language version of *The Beaver* magazine [*Le Beaver*, February/March 2008]. He was very aware of *The Beaver* and was pleased to receive a copy. He was also pleased by the fact that *The Beaver*'s Quebec 400th anniversary issue was "*en français*" and said it would be greatly appreciated.

RON ROWBERRY (RET. HBC)
KIRKLAND, QUEBEC

The seeds of Canada

Re: "Living History: Where Canada began" [February/March 2008], in referring to the brick ruins in Quebec City of the Château Saint-Louis and Fort Saint-Louis, I take exception to Manon Goyette's comment that: "This is the seed that gave birth to all of Canada." With all due respect, it is *another* seed [emphasis is mine], not *the* seed.

Besides considering the reality that the First Nations peoples had already been here for thousands of years, long

before Champlain showed up, the first seed of European settlement that gave birth to all of Canada was in fact Champlain's first settlement at Annapolis Royal in 1604 — long before Quebec City appeared on France's imperial radar.

The simple reality is, what gave birth to Canada was a whole array of different seeds that got planted at different times and places — there wasn't one seed.

LEO J. DEVEAU
REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN

A reader returns

It's good to be back reading *The Beaver*! I was with the Hudson's Bay Company, Northern Stores Division, from 1972 to 1983. Staff at the store would always get a copy of *The Beaver* when we got our company staff magazine, *The Moccassin Telegraph*. There were always copies of both in the staff room.

I have kept a great stack of *Beaver* magazines from those years and I treasure them. For some reason, when I left HBC I never bothered to subscribe to this wonderful magazine. I regret that I missed all of those years of great reading.

My time as an employee with the "Company of Adventurers" gave me my passion for Canadian history. Keep up the good work on the magazine.

JIM INGOLDSBY
RED DEER, ALBERTA

Bravo, *Beaver*

Your special edition on la ville de Quebec was fascinating. It is the best thing I have read from *The Beaver*. I was so impressed that I have convinced the rest of the family that Quebec City should be the place to visit this summer.

CLAY MERRITHEW
KILLARNEY ROAD, NEW BRUNSWICK

ERRATA

Due to an editing error, the article "Seeking Champlain" [February/March 2008] states that Samuel de Champlain was wounded in battle at Lake Simcoe. In fact, historians generally believe that he was wounded somewhere south of Lake Ontario and north of Syracuse, New York.

In the April/May 2008 issue, the story "The Fort Ross Motel" implied that Fort Ross was permanently abandoned in 1943. While Bay staff had to be rescued that year, the post was not permanently closed until 1948.

Meanwhile, in the same issue, in the illustration "Arctic Ambitions," the flag of Norway was inadvertently placed near Iceland. It should have been placed on Svalbard.

***The Beaver* welcomes readers' comments.** E-mail us at editors@historysociety.ca or write to *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 0T6 Canada. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.

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Sea-to-Sky Culture

Already known for its world-class ski resort, Whistler, British Columbia, now boasts a world-class First Nations interpretive facility. The Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, due to open in June, is dedicated to showcasing the history and culture of the area's aboriginal peoples. Located across from the Fairmont Chateau Whistler Hotel, it was designed with international visitors in mind and is expected to draw capacity crowds during the 2010 Olympics.

Key features include a First Nations village that incorporates two types of traditional dwellings — the longhouse of the coastal Squamish people and the "pit house" of the interior-dwelling Lil'wat Nation. Also featured are interpretive trails, a ceremonial gathering area, and various cultural and historical exhibits and demonstrations that will include aboriginal cultures from other parts of Canada and the world.

The centre is the linchpin of a project known as Cultural Journey Sea-to-Sky, which includes seven pullouts along the highway from Vancouver to Whistler with sign shelters containing interpretive panels.

COURTESY SQUAMISH LIL'WAT CULTURAL CENTRE

Rendering of The Great Hall of the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre.

THE LOUISBOURG ASSOCIATION / HEIDI MOSES

Show your colours!

Encampment 2008 brings together more than 700 history enthusiasts from across the continent to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the second siege of Louisbourg. From July 24 to 27, the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site in Nova Scotia will host battlefield re-enactments as well as eighteenth-century-style fireworks, camp-life demonstrations, music, and dance. Parks Canada will also open a new exhibit on Brigadier General James Wolfe, who played a key role in the 1758 siege. For more information visit www.louisbourg2008.com. To see more photos visit TheBeaver.ca.

TAKE THE DAY OFF

June 15

To celebrate the launch in 1962 of Canada's first space vehicle, an 11.3-kilogram instrument package. Look way up.

Currents

Our home & native ...

Jolly Jumper

Every parent wants a happy, healthy, bouncing baby girl or boy, and Olivia Poole was no different.

When Poole's first child, Joseph, was born in Ontario in 1910, she remembered that mothers at her childhood Ojibwa community in Minnesota would sometimes secure their babies in a papoose tied to a sturdy tree limb. They would then pull downward, allowing the baby to bounce gently.

To make her own baby bouncer, Poole used a cloth diaper for a harness, an axe handle for a spreader bar, and had a blacksmith forge a spring to allow for the bounce. She called the device a Jolly Jumper.

Born in the United States, Poole later moved to Brandon, Manitoba, where she studied music and met her husband. All of her seven children, and later her grandchildren, spent time in the Jolly Jumper.

COURTESY JOLLY JUMPER

After Poole's family convinced her to try selling the device, commercial production of the Jolly Jumper began in 1948 in British Columbia. In 1957 Olivia and Joseph registered the patent, and today the baby bouncers are still made in Canada and sold under their original name.

— Kristen Fry

Creative Class

Harmonic Convergence

A one-of-a-kind musical instrument that links Canadians and their history will be touring the country again this summer. The *Six String Nation* project centres on a guitar built from more than sixty components — each of which tells a story about Canadian history or culture — and results from a collaboration between broadcaster Jowi Taylor and master luthier George Rizsanyi.

Rizsanyi built the instrument at his Nova Scotia workshop. His fantastic

The Golden Spruce.
The guitar includes the only wood ever taken from the legendary tree known as Kiidk'yaas, or The Golden Spruce, a natural wonder sacred to the Haida people near Port Clements, B.C., that was dealt a fatal blow in 1997 by a misguided logging protester. Courtesy of the Haida community of Old Masset.

PHOTO: DOUG NICHOLSON / SIX STRING NATION

John Ware's Cabin.
Alberta's first black cowboy, John Ware, was born into slavery in South Carolina but died a legend in 1905, days after Alberta became a province. The wood is from his cabin in present-day Dinosaur Provincial Park. Courtesy of the Royal Tyrell Museum.

PHOTO: SANDOR FIZLI / SIX STRING NATION

June 24
To observe the day of Canada's first recorded tennis tournament, held in Montreal in 1878. Get into the swing of it.

July 7
To mark the day in 1710 that Intendant Jacques Raudot penalized unlicensed doctors working in the colony of New France. Swallow your medicine.

creation includes pieces of objects and structures such as a doorway from Canada's first Chinatown; the lighthouse that received the first distress signal from the *Titanic*; raw silver from the Beaver mine at Cobalt, Ontario; copper from the roof of the Library of Parliament; a window screen from painter Lawren Harris's studio; and pieces of mastodon and mammoth ivory.

For Taylor, *Six String Nation* is a labour of love that has held his enthusiasm for more than a decade. It blends his fascination with Canada's multiple identities and his longstanding interest in diverse forms of music. (Taylor hosted the award-winning CBC Radio program *Global Village*.)

While he has gathered contributions tied to names such as John A. Macdonald, Wayne Gretzky, and Nancy Greene, Taylor has seen the impact of pieces with a local connection. "The idea of Canada must be felt locally if it is to mean anything at all," he maintains.

One of Taylor's proudest moments with the guitar was at the 2006 Tyne Valley Oyster Shucking Championships on Prince Edward Island. "All kinds of people were interested in Maurice Richard's ring and Pierre Trudeau's canoe paddle, but the most common question I got was 'Where's Joe's knife?'" People were asking about the tool wielded by local hero and perennial Canadian oyster-shucking champion Joe Labobe.

The list of musicians who have performed with the guitar reads like a who's who of the Canadian music scene: Bruce Cockburn, Mighty Popo, Feist, Michel Pagliaro, and James Keelaghan, among many others. For more on the guitar and tour dates, visit www.sixstringnation.com. **— Phil Koch**

Maurice Richard's Stanley Cup Ring. Maurice "Rocket" Richard commissioned a set of rings for himself and his Montreal Canadiens teammates after they won the Stanley Cup in 1956. A piece of gold from Richard's ring was included courtesy of David Treherne.

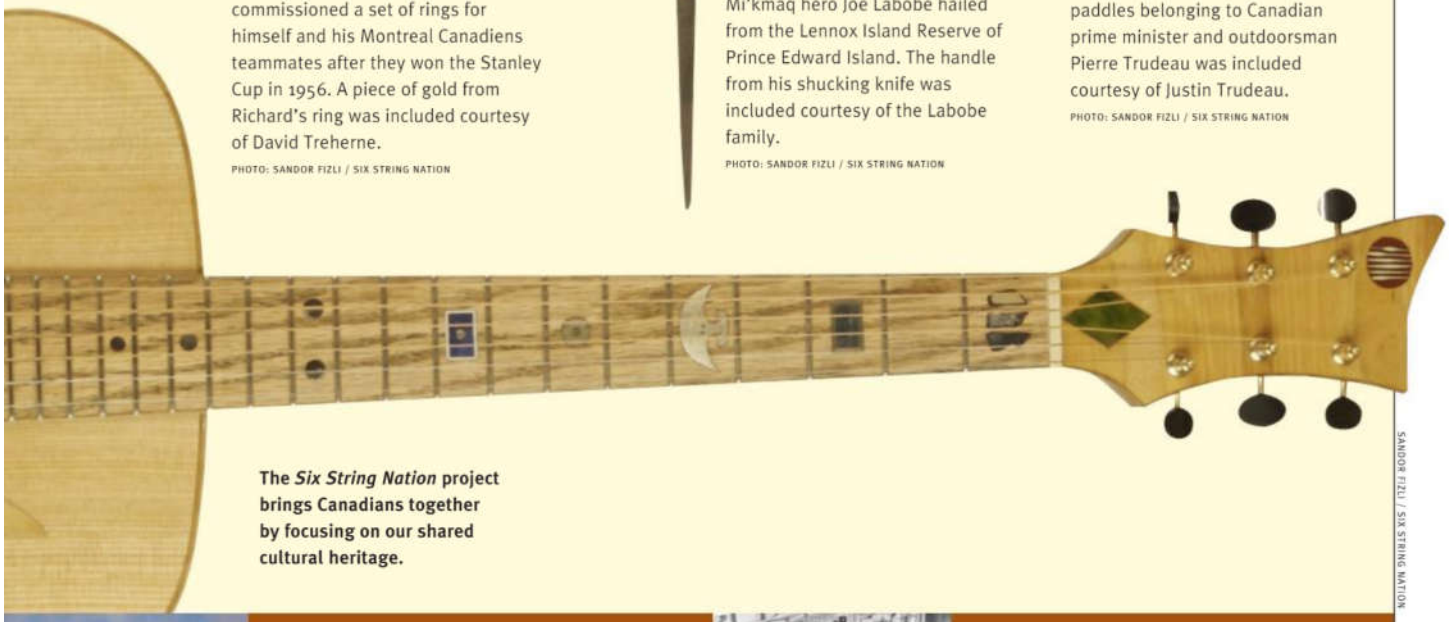
PHOTO: SANDOR FIZLI / SIX STRING NATION

Joe Labobe's knife. Champion oyster shucker and Mi'kmaq hero Joe Labobe hailed from the Lennox Island Reserve of Prince Edward Island. The handle from his shucking knife was included courtesy of the Labobe family.

PHOTO: SANDOR FIZLI / SIX STRING NATION

Pierre Trudeau's canoe paddle. A piece of wood from one of the paddles belonging to Canadian prime minister and outdoorsman Pierre Trudeau was included courtesy of Justin Trudeau.

PHOTO: SANDOR FIZLI / SIX STRING NATION



The *Six String Nation* project brings Canadians together by focusing on our shared cultural heritage.

SANDOR FIZLI / SIX STRING NATION

July 19

To note the day Sir James Outram and guide Christian Kaufmann were the first to scale Alberta's highest peak, Mount Columbia, in 1902. Reach for the top.

July 22

To remember the day the heavy water-cooled NRX reactor went into service at Chalk River, Ontario, in 1947. Crank up the air conditioner.

Currents

Living History

Window on the tundra

Fred Ford poses with Henry T. Ford's fish spear and a photo of his grandfather.

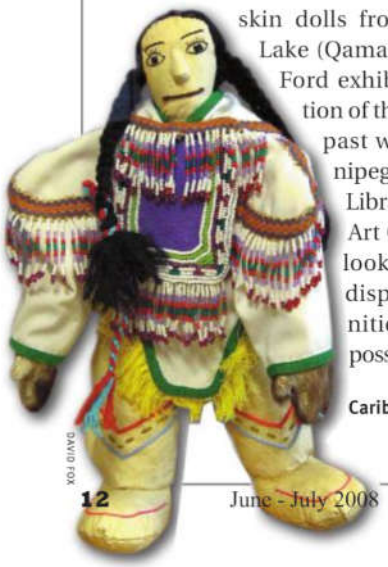
MIKE DEAL/WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

When Fred Ford went north in 1980 to learn about his English and Inuit ancestors, he didn't imagine he would stay for nearly twenty-five years. Nor was he planning to add to his family's collection of artifacts and photos that document the unique ways of Nunavut's only inland Inuit community. Ford simply wanted to discover his past while trying out life in the North.

Today, after almost a quarter-century at Baker Lake, Ford lives in Winnipeg with a huge collection of art and artifacts that provides insight into what sets the Caribou Inuit apart from their coastal neighbours.

Ford was born in southern Ontario, but his interest in the North was piqued when his grandfather, Henry T. Ford, came south with a trunk of photo negatives and other items. Fred eventually developed the negatives, which date to the early decades of the twentieth century and portray details of life on the tundra.

Besides the photographs, his impressive collection includes prints, tapestries, tools, clothing, and rarely seen stone-faced and caribou-skin dolls from the Baker Lake (Qamani'tuaq) area. Ford exhibited a selection of these items this past winter at Winnipeg's Millennium Library Blankstein Art Gallery and is looking for more display opportunities, including possibly at schools.



DAVID FOX

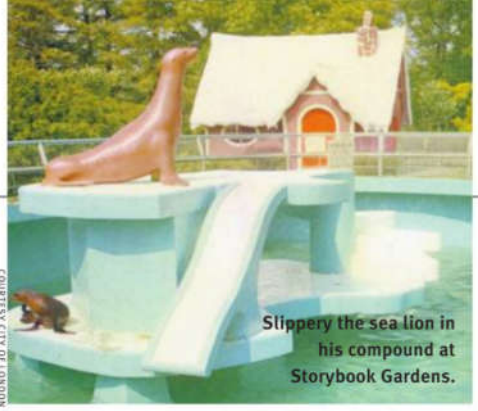
Caribou-skin doll

At a talk held in conjunction with the exhibit, Ford told of his ancestors who went to work for the Hudson's Bay Company, married Inuit, and raised children in the North. The nomadic Caribou Inuit had little contact with the outside world until the eighteenth century. "They thought they were the only people in the world," says Ford.

Living in tents made of caribou in the summer, and in igloos during winter, they depended on the caribou's fall migration for their survival. "For a nomadic people, possessions were a liability," Ford notes.

However, with the arrival of European influence and a caribou shortage that brought near starvation in the 1950s, the itinerant life of the Caribou Inuit ended. "Moving with the rhythm of the animals," says Ford, gave way to recreational pursuits. The treeless landscape meant lumber had to be brought in to build permanent homes.

With no written language and the cultural divide between young and old widening, the tales and myths of the past are at risk of being lost. Ford hopes one day to see some of his collection preserved at an Inuit heritage centre in Winnipeg. For sights and sounds of the Baker Lake people, including items from Ford's collection, look for a link at TheBeaver.ca. **— Beverley Tallon**



COURTESY CITY OF LONDON

Slippery the sea lion in his compound at Storybook Gardens.

Slippery's great escape

Among the many events that made a splash in Canada fifty years ago — the maiden flight of the Avro Arrow, the landslide victory of John Diefenbaker, the founding of the Golden Retriever Club of Canada — is one that escapes many historians' notice. This unsung event concerns an "international incident" involving Slippery the sea lion.

Slippery who?

Slippery was a *zalophus californianus* who, on June 16, 1958, gave the slip to security staff at his pool in Storybook Gardens in London, Ontario. He slid into the nearby Thames River and embraced fame as a sea lion on the lam. Newspapers gave front-page treatment to the search for Slippery, who was sighted in Lake St. Clair, the Detroit River, Lake Erie, and Ohio's Maumee and Portage Rivers.

Ten days and 400 kilometres later, the animal escape artist was captured in an Ohio boathouse by a Toledo zookeeper. Tempers flared when Toledo announced it would keep Slippery, since he was caught in international waters. Several days later, after record-breaking crowds had come to view the wily sea creature, the Americans magnanimously announced they would give Slippery back.

Thousands lined London's streets to view the celebrity mammal and "Slippery Day" was proclaimed by the mayor. Not until years later was it revealed that the custody battle had been a hoax to garner publicity for Storybook Gardens, which this summer celebrates its fiftieth year.

As for Slippery, he lived out his days in Storybook and died in 1967. A statue at Storybook commemorates his glorious feat.

— Nelle Oosterom

Thanks to Carling Luymes, who uncovered the story of Slippery while researching Canadian amusement parks for her Master of Public History program at the University of Western Ontario.

From left, H. Sanford Riley, Lloyd Axworthy, Nolan Reilly, and Deborah Morrison.

MARIANNE HELM

Historic union

Canada's National History Society and the University of Winnipeg are forming a unique partnership that will see the Society, including staff of *The Beaver*, take up residence in the university's historic Bryce Hall.

The objective, says History Society president Deborah Morrison, is "to create a centre focused on bridging the divide that sometimes happens between the academic research of history and the public communication and commemoration of history." The History Society provides access to the public via its network of teachers and Canadian history enthusiasts, while the university houses a respected cluster of historians and researchers.

The Society's move comes as the university is adding to its strength in the field of history and has hired new professors specializing in women's history and the history of education.

U of W History Department chair Nolan Reilly, who also serves on the executive of the Canadian Oral History Association, said the move will augment the Winnipeg-based association's efforts to connect oral historians with researchers of oral traditions. "It's all about giving a profile to history and building critical mass," Reilly said.

Reilly said he is also looking forward to the commencement this fall of the H. Sanford Riley Fellowships in Canadian History, named for the university's chancellor after his major donation in 2006, and designed to bring the country's top historians to conduct research, offer public lectures, and work with students at the university.

The chancellor noted that Winnipeg sits at the confluence of virtually every Canadian historical movement and said he expects the History Society's presence will add to the university's prominence. "If you're a young academic and you're interested in Canadian history, you're going to look at the University of Winnipeg and say there's a lot going on there," Riley said.

University president Lloyd Axworthy says the university already feels it has one of the best history departments in Canada, and having the History Society on campus will only strengthen that. "We will have all the tools to go deeper into Canadian history," Axworthy said.

All in the family

When it comes to genealogy, family lore is an essential part of any search. But don't always take grandma's tales as gospel, says Fraser Dunford.

Every family has stories, and they are essential components in any genealogical research.

In my family, we had a story that one of my lines (Payne) came from the village of Nunney in Somerset, England. In the late sixties my wife and I spent a very cold, wet, miserable Saturday afternoon in the Nunney parish church looking at the original parish registers.

Of the thousands of names we saw from over the several centuries in those registers, not one was Payne.

So much for family stories.

Years later, when I had learned how to do genealogical research and so approached this problem properly, I discovered that my Payne ancestors, just prior to moving to Canada in the early 1830s, had lived in a house called The Nunnery in Frome, a mid-sized town not far from Nunney. This is an important point about family stories: They are seldom accurate, but they almost always contain some element of truth.

My grandmother claimed her family (Leslie) was English, yet when I searched the records, long after my grandmother was dead, I found that her grandfather repeatedly said, in various documents, that he had been born in Ireland.

Why the discrepancy?

The element of truth here is about the character of my grandmother — and the negative perception of the Irish in late-1800s rural Ontario.

Beginning genealogists need to heed the lessons of these two stories. Beginners often start with family stories, but you must never allow family lore to narrow your field of view. If I had believed these stories, I would never have found my ancestors in either family.

Genealogy operates on a number of guidelines. The first guideline is: work from the known to the unknown. This is the rule I broke when I went to Nunney. If I had found Paynes there, how would I have known they were my Paynes? Fortunately, I did not find any — or I might have wasted years constructing a family tree of great value to someone else.

COURTESY FRASER DUNFORD

Fraser Dunford's great-grandfather, George Leslie (shown here), was the son of an Irishman — despite claims by Dunford's grandmother to the contrary.

You know yourself best, so start with yourself. You likely know when and where you were born, and who your parents are. Now consider your parents. When and where were they married? When and where were they born? Who were their parents? And how do you know this to be true?

This leads to the second guideline: Prove it! Until you do, it's just a story, not a fact. Proof is a birth certificate, marriage certificate, or an entry in a parish register. A census record may be true, although ages are notoriously inaccurate. Obituaries can be terribly wrong. The obituary for one of my great-great-grandfathers says he served in the elite French Imperial Guard during the Napoleonic wars.

If so, he was about four years old — a bit young for a soldier.

Genealogy is a fascinating hobby, so fascinating that for some of us it becomes a profession. It combines history, geography, and social studies with the best components of a whodunit. Many people get immense satisfaction from learning their own family history. Always remember, it is your own ancestors you are studying — who they were, where they were, when they were there, what they did, and why.

When it comes to genealogy, you must never allow family lore to narrow your field of view.

Like any hobby, there is a right way and a wrong way to do things. You would not hold a golf club as you would a baseball bat. Like any hobby, there is a learning curve. Would you take up a hobby that required no effort, no skill?

Like many hobbies, there is a social aspect, which gives the third guideline: Join a local genealogy society. The best way to learn genealogy is by listening to and talking with other genealogists. We are a friendly breed, and very eager to help beginners. After all, beginners haven't heard all our wonderful war stories!

Now, let me tell you about my ancestor who was in the Napoleonic Wars....

Have a question about genealogy? Email it to: roots@historysociety.ca. Our experts will try to answer selected questions from readers like you.

Dr. Fraser Dunford is a professional engineer and a former university academic and administrator. In his second career, he is a professional genealogist and the executive director of the Ontario Genealogical Society. He is the author of several books on genealogy.

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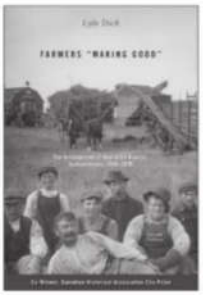

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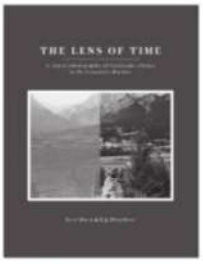

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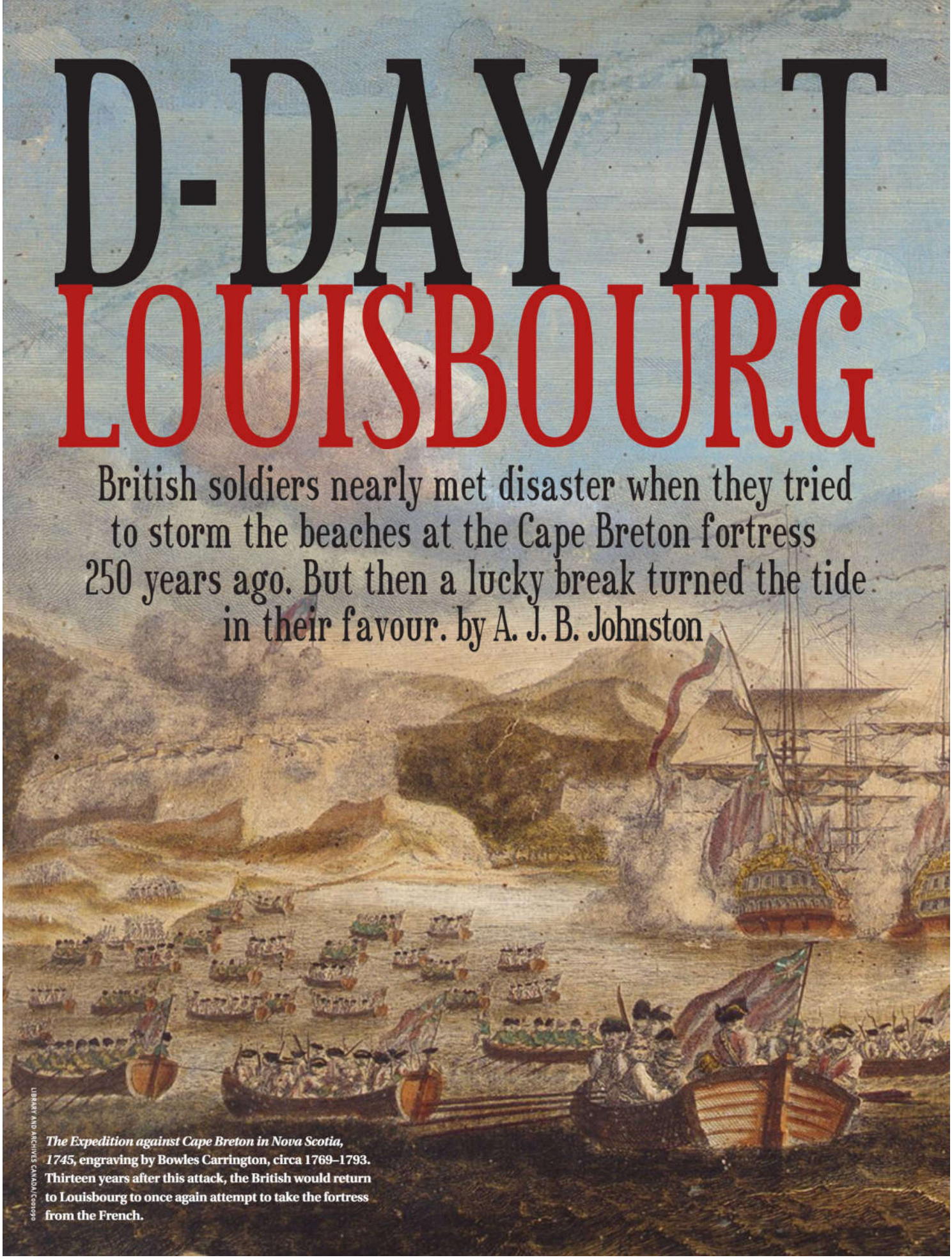
D-DAY AT LOUISBOURG

British soldiers nearly met disaster when they tried to storm the beaches at the Cape Breton fortress 250 years ago. But then a lucky break turned the tide in their favour. by A. J. B. Johnston



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***The Expedition against Cape Breton in Nova Scotia, 1745*, engraving by Bowles Carrington, circa 1769–1793. Thirteen years after this attack, the British would return to Louisbourg to once again attempt to take the fortress from the French.**

Heading for the ramparts of Louisbourg in the early morning hours of June 1, 1758, rushing to see for himself what his sentries were reporting, Governor Augustin de Boschenry de Drucour was filled as much with dread as with an energized sense of duty. It was no secret to anyone that the coming clash, so long anticipated, was going to be crucial. Never before in the century and a half of imperial rivalry in North America had France and Great Britain sent the kind of armies and navies that they were now sending across the ocean. If Louisbourg fell, one of Louis XV's major bastions on the continent would … well, Drucour didn't want to think about that.

At daybreak, sentries shouted that there were sails down the coast in Gabarus Bay. Drucour, head of the colonies of Île Royale (Cape Breton Island) and Île Saint-Jean (Prince Edward Island), did not doubt the news. He knew British ships had overwintered in Halifax and that a much larger number had recently arrived from England. Standing atop the ramparts, his heart may have skipped a beat as he counted the vessels. There were seventy — but there were more to come, for a total of twenty-four ships of the line, nineteen frigates, sloops, and fireships, and nearly 130 transports carrying nearly two thousand pieces of ordnance among them. Drucour must have feared he was looking at certain defeat.

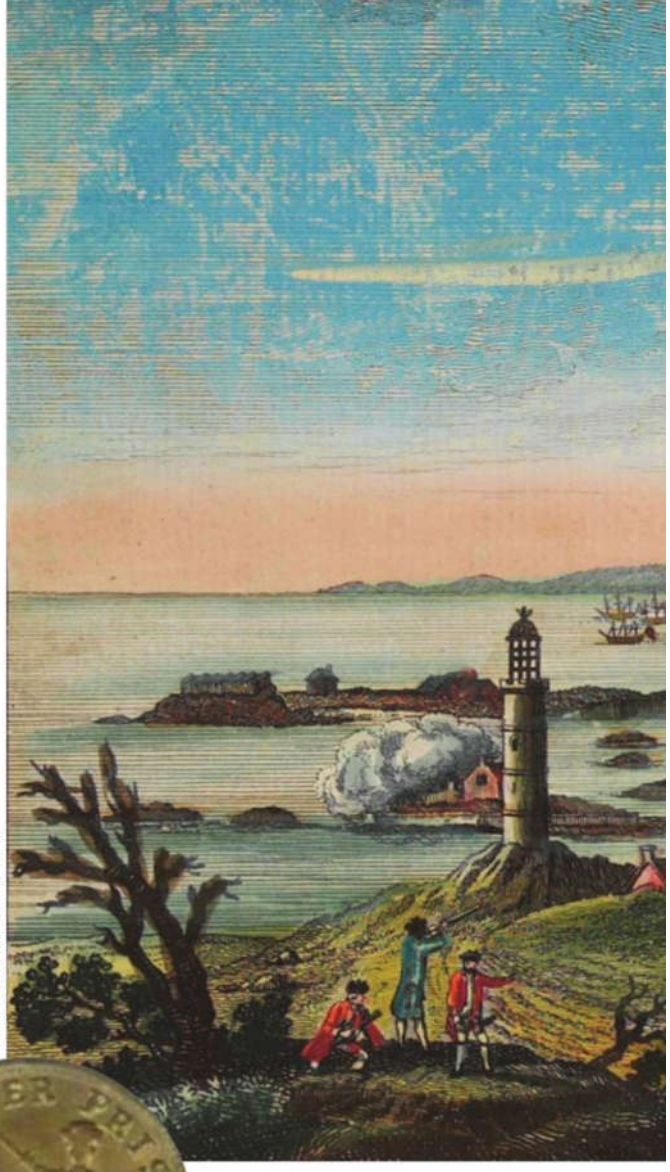
The fifty-five-year-old French commander was able enough. But in truth, he had never wanted to be posted to this cold, damp, and dismal North Atlantic fortress. However, the minister of marine had insisted. A career naval officer, Drucour had worked his way steadily up the ranks. But he had never commanded on land and was not wealthy enough to handle the expenses a governor was expected to put out — such as providing lavish entertainment for the young noblemen under his command. Thus he went deeply in debt.

He had arrived in Louisbourg in 1754, just as fresh hostilities between France and Britain were breaking out. Each year that followed, Drucour had done his best to get Louisbourg ready for the expected British assault, yet he knew how vulnerable the stronghold was.

It was especially vulnerable in 1758. Louisbourg relied heavily on French ships for both provisions and protection, but British squadrons had that spring prevented most of the ships bound for Louisbourg from crossing the ocean.

Having confirmed the British presence, Drucour gave his orders. French drummers beat the *générale*, the drumbeat that signalled an emergency. Militia were commanded to go to their assigned posts after they completed the religious procession of Corpus Christi, scheduled for later in the day. Senior officers took command of the forces — French regulars, Acadian partisans, and aboriginal warriors — who were already camped at the beaches where the British were expected to land.

The beach considered most likely to draw the British was Anse de la Cormorandière (Kennington Cove, sometimes called Freshwater Cove), where nearly a thousand defenders were waiting.



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Reverse of British medal struck to honour Admiral Edward Boscawen's leadership at Louisbourg in 1758. Boscawen commanded the British naval forces during the siege. The medal shows Drucour, the French governor, kneeling in surrender to a British officer. The other side of the brass medal features a bust of Boscawen.

Two days later, on June 3, 1758, with all ships in the massive expedition against Louisbourg finally anchored in Gabarus Bay, Major-General Jeffery Amherst sat down aboard the HMS *Namur* to write a speech for the roughly thirteen thousand officers and enlisted men under his command. A meticulous and prudent administrator — it was his first time commanding a large army — the forty-one-year old Amherst tried to cover all the bases in his address.

Everyone was to show "Zeal & Valour" because "His Majesty & the Nation ... [have] their Eyes fix'd on the Operation of this great Fleet & Army." Troops were to pay "exact Obedience to all orders" and "to live in Friendship & Harmony amongst each other." Each soldier's well-being was

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a priority, so there were ample provisions and medical facilities. On the other hand, the "least Murmur or Complaint ... will be checked with the greatest severity, and Backwardness in sights of the Enemy will be Punished with imediate Death." Anyone who deserted would be "hang'd with Infamy as a Traitor."

Amherst next spelled out what the units were to do during the landing. Regular infantry soldiers were to advance on the French positions, "discharge their Pieces loaded with two Balls and then rush upon them with their Bayonets." Members of the newly raised Highland regiments, some of whom had fought against the English army in Scotland little more than a decade earlier, were to run upon the enemy "with their drawen Swords." The light infantry troops were "to oppose the Indians, Canadians and other Painted Savages of the Island" and make "these Howling Barbarians ... fly before them."

Jeffery Amherst had strong opinions about native fighters. The scalping and killing of British prisoners by aboriginal warriors after the surrender of Fort William Henry in 1757 was fresh in his mind. Amherst's anti-native sentiments would lead him, only a few years later, to sanction the idea — horrific today, though not in the eighteenth century — of spreading smallpox-infested blankets among Britain's aboriginal enemies in the Ohio country.

In his speech, Amherst displayed confidence that everything was going to proceed smoothly. Once the men

Above:
A View of Louisbourg in North America Taken from the Lighthouse when that city was besieged in 1758. **Late 1700s engraving with watercolour based on painting by Captain Charles Ince. Engraver unknown.**

Left:
Sir Jeffrey Amherst This miniature, done in 1765, is a copy made from a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

French infantry return fire on British forces outside the walls of Fortress Louisbourg during Encampment '99, a battle re-enactment held in 1999.

LOUISBOURG: THE

1713: Louisbourg settled as a fishing port on the newly founded French colony of Île Royale (Cape Breton Island).

1719: Construction begins on a stone fortress that is so massive it eventually becomes known as the "Gibraltar of North America."

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were ashore, he asserted, "the Business is half done." Siege camps would be established "slightly Entrenched or Pallisaded, that the men may ly quiet in their Tents." The rest of the address focused on practical matters, like the reminder that "a Man who is Drunk on any kind of Duty will be Punish'd without mercy."

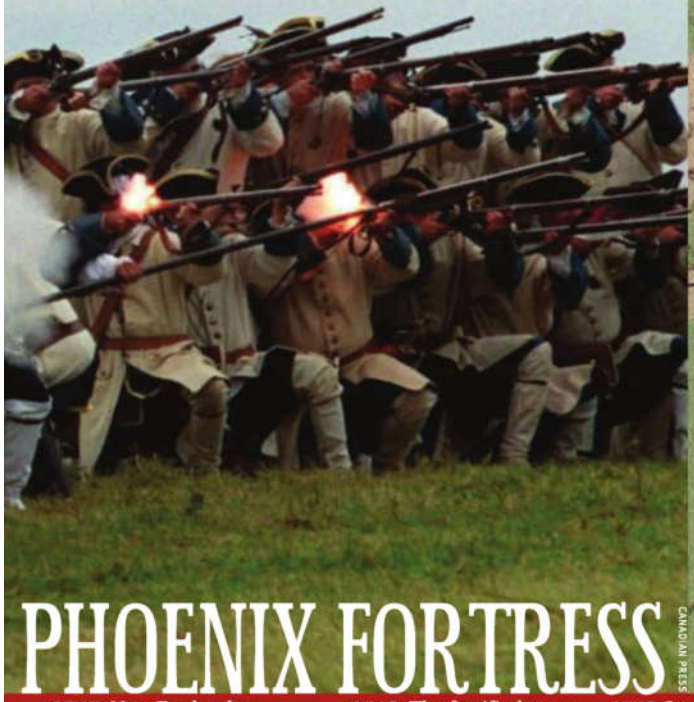
As the French watched, the British waited for the gusting winds and rolling waves to calm down so they could send their small boats ashore. They finally found their chance.

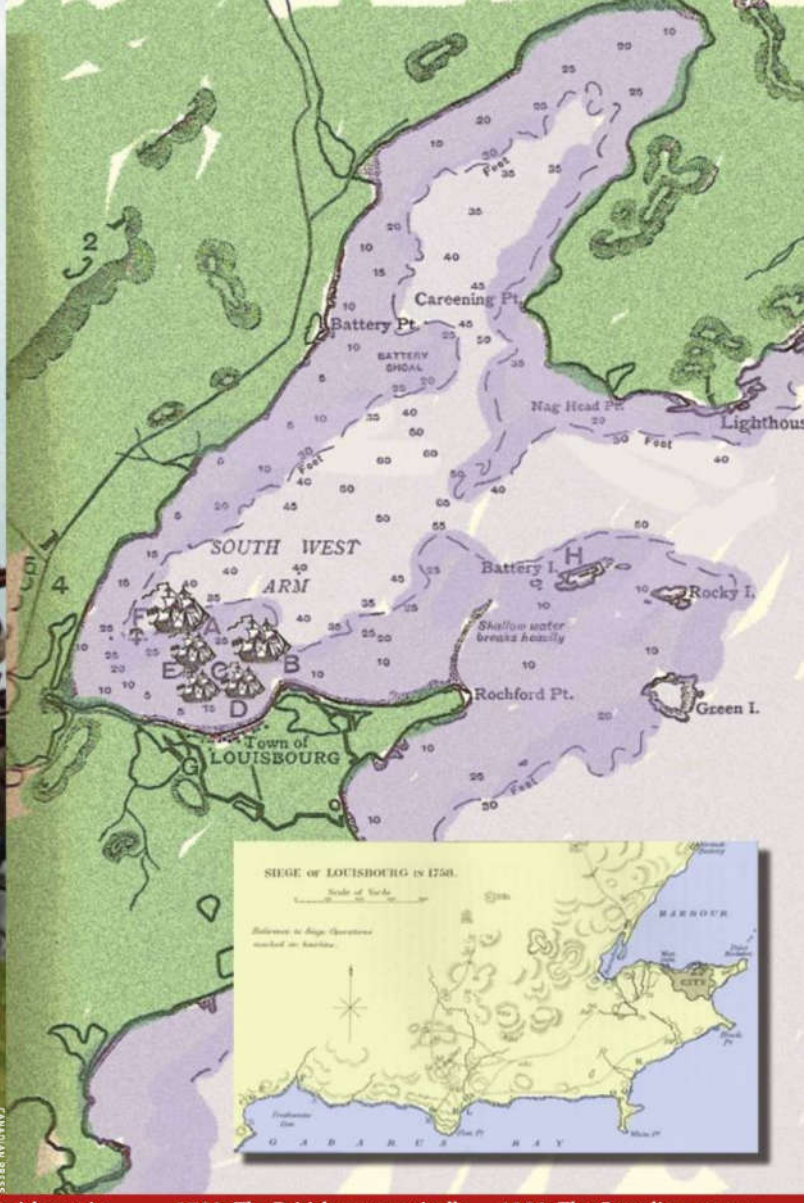
As midnight struck and the calendar rolled over to June 8, sailors extinguished most visible lights on the British transports anchored in Gabarus Bay. The exceptions were at the waterlines of three ships, where lanterns hung over the sides to signal where the landing boats were to form before setting off for three different beaches. Two of the flotillas were to be diversions, intended to keep French defenders from reinforcing the intended landing beach, Anse de la Cormorandière.

The third and key flotilla was under the command of thirty-one-year-old Brigadier James Wolfe, an officer eager to take risks if they led to glory. It was Wolfe who would lead the amphibious descent at Cormorandière.

Between midnight and 2 a.m., soldiers lowered themselves and their muskets into the waiting boats, taking great care to muffle the sounds of their movements. Each soldier carried enough bread and cheese for two days. The

The British invading fleet arrived southwest of Louisbourg in Gabarus Bay on June 1 (see inset map lower right). French defenders at Anse de la Cormorandière (Freshwater Cove on inset map), Pointe Platte (Flat Point) and Pointe Blanche (White Point) held the attackers at bay until Brigadier James Wolfe stumbled onto a hidden, unguarded landing place at Cormorandière.





CANADIAN PRESS

PHOENIX FORTRESS

1745: New Englanders mount an attack a year after war declared between Britain and France. It is captured after a forty-six-day siege.

1748: The fortified town and the colony of Île Royale are given back to the French under the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.

1758: Louisbourg is besieged a second time by an overwhelming British force. The French surrender after seven weeks.

1760: The British systematically blow up Louisbourg's surrounding fortifications. Many cut stones are carried off and used in buildings still standing today.

1961: The Canadian government begins reconstruction of one-fifth of the original town and one-quarter of the fortifications.

SOURCE: PARKS CANADA

matériel that would sustain the assault — tents, blankets, provisions, field artillery pieces, and other essentials — would come later.

Several thousand British soldiers bobbed in their small boats in somewhat rough water for two hours while a naval officer rowed closer to shore to assess the surf. He found it was "not such as to prevent Boats landing." The descent could go ahead.

The sun was just beginning to brighten the sky at 4 a.m. as the guns on several British warships began to fire. Drummers within the walls of Louisbourg responded by beating the *générale*. Drucour sent one contingent of soldiers to the closest headland, Pointe Blanche; another headed to nearby high ground.

About 4:15 a.m., with the bombardment continuing, the British landing boats received the signal to set off for land.

Peering into the dawn, the French onshore saw two flotillas of small boats: a large one heading toward Pointe Platte (Flat Point) and Pointe Blanche (White Point) and a smaller one bound for Anse de la Cormorandière .

The three French positions were all located south of Louisbourg and overlooked Gabarus Bay. Only at Cormorandière, the placement farthest to the west, did the French commander have his men hold their fire. Amherst wrote:

Eighteenth-century hand grenade discovered on a beach near Louisbourg. These hollow iron balls, packed with gunpowder, exploded into a hail of deadly shrapnel.

CWM/19910132-026

"Enemy acted very wisely, did not throw away a Shot till the Boats were near in shore, and then directed the whole of their Cannon and Musketry upon them."

When Lieutenant-Colonel Jean Mascle de Saint-Julhien, the commander at Anse de la Cormorandière, gave the order to fire, there began a deadly onslaught. One British sergeant recalled later that the shots "came whistling about our ears. Nothing could be like it, and as our ships of war kept up a fire upon the batteries to cover our landing, there was a terrific hullabaloo." One shot killed the man beside him and tore a lieutenant nearby "into shivers" then "cut off both legs" of a man holding the tiller of the boat.

Actors dressed as French soldiers take part in Encampment '99 at Fortress Louisbourg.

COPYRIGHT PARKS CANADA/FORTRESS OF LOUISBOURG

Many boats endured similar hot fire. Major Alexander Murray recorded there were "about 60 shot holes in my boat, yet nobody in her wounded." The barrage was terrifying to most, exhilarating to a few. A British sergeant stood up in one boat and shouted: "Who would not go to Hell, to hear such music for half an hour?" Moments later he was dead. In another incident, a lieutenant opened his mouth wide to give a command, when "a musket ball went through it, and passed out at his cheek."

A few boats overturned and some soldiers, weighed down by heavy uniforms, went to their deaths in the cold Atlantic. An eyewitness wrote: "One Boat in which were Twenty Grenadiers and an officer was stove, and Every one Drowned." The attempt to land was looking like a disaster.

With casualties mounting and the British not able to get anyone ashore, James Wolfe signalled a retreat. The turnaround, however, was not easy, with heavily laden boats turning with difficulty into the rolling waves, and the French continuing their fire.

Yet, amidst all the smoke and confusion, fortune smiled on the British. Three of their boats veered off from the rest. Their officers had spied a cobbled beach between two rock outcrops that was "free from the Enemy's fire." Seeing this, Wolfe and Major George Scott, in charge of the irregulars, ordered their boats and those nearby to head for the same spot.

Stepping onto the undefended shore, the regulars, the Highlanders and the light infantry clicked their bayonets onto their muskets, something forbidden in the tightly packed boats. Approaching the steep slope before them, the excited soldiers began to climb, rushing "forward with impetuous Emulation, without Regard to any previous Orders," according to one eyewitness.

No French defenders waited for them when they came over the top. The French had not seen them. The fortuitous discovery of a landing place out of French sightlines turned a morning doomed to defeat into a moment of possible success.

Upon learning that the enemy had made a landing above and beyond his left flank, Saint-Julhien ordered in reinforcements. Before they arrived, however, the closest French positions gave way. The enemy was coming at them from higher ground, an unexpected angle. They felt outnumbered, even though they were not.

Worried that the British might cut off *all* one thousand defenders at Anse de la Cormorandière, Saint-Julhien opted to retreat back inside the fortified town. Had he chosen to throw everyone at the tide of British coming up from the beach, the outcome on June 8 might have been different. For there were only about 150 British soldiers in the first wave. Alas, for the French, Saint-Julhien couldn't know that.

That the enemy made it ashore on its first attempt stunned Drucour and the people of Louisbourg. An offi-

A Governor's Lament

This letter was written by Governor Augustin de Boschenry de Drucour, governor of Louisbourg. He wrote it to a friend while held as a prisoner of war in England.

October 1, 1758. Andover, England. ... I wish, Sir, I could erase from my memory the four years [1754–8] I passed in Louisbourg. The bad state of the place, the impossibility of making it better, the subsistence of a garrison and inhabitants supported there at the King's expense, and threatened with famine once a month, gave no little uneasiness and anxiety to all who were charged therewith. ... In all besieged towns there are entrenchments where those who are not on duty may retire, and be covered from the enemy's fire; but at Louisbourg we had not a safe place even for the wounded; so that they were almost as much exposed every minute of the four-and-twenty hours, as if they had been on the covered-way. Nevertheless, the men did not murmur in the least, nor discover the smallest discontent; which was owing to the good example and exact discipline of their officers. None deserted but foreigners...

cial aboard one of the French warships anchored in the harbour expressed a pessimism felt by most: "We are waiting for providence to decide our Fate."

Eleven days would pass before the British opened their first batteries to begin the bombardment of Louisbourg — first they had to bring all their *matériel* ashore and erect their camps. Once the artillerymen began their work — and with each week they erected more batteries — the days of the French stronghold were numbered. The end came on July 25–26 with the nighttime burning and capture of the last French ships and a panic-filled aftermath of desperate surrender negotiations. Actual possession took place July 27.

A proud man, Drucour sought the honours of war that were customary at that time — meaning his surrendering troops would be able to march out of the gates fully armed, drums beating and flags flying. But Amherst refused, promising the French regulars their lives but little more. Along with all his troops, Drucour was sent to England as a prisoner of war. By the time he returned to France, he was destitute and in poor health. He died in 1762.

The British victory marked the end of French colonization in Atlantic Canada, which dated back to the early 1600s. French and Acadian people on both Cape Breton and present-day Prince Edward Island were rounded up and shipped to France. Then the British devastated French-settled areas up the St. John River, along the Atlantic coast of today's New Brunswick, and on the Gaspé peninsula.

The final blow, of course, came with the fall of Quebec, when the French were defeated at the Plains of Abraham in 1759 and Montreal surrendered in 1760. With the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763, Britain clearly held sway in North America.

A.J.B. (John) Johnston is a historian with Parks Canada who has written many publications that deal with the histories of Louisbourg, Cape Breton, Acadia, and Nova Scotia. He is based in Halifax.

Go behind the story with The Beaver's podcast interview with A.J.B. (John) Johnston at: thebeaver.ca

Et Cetera

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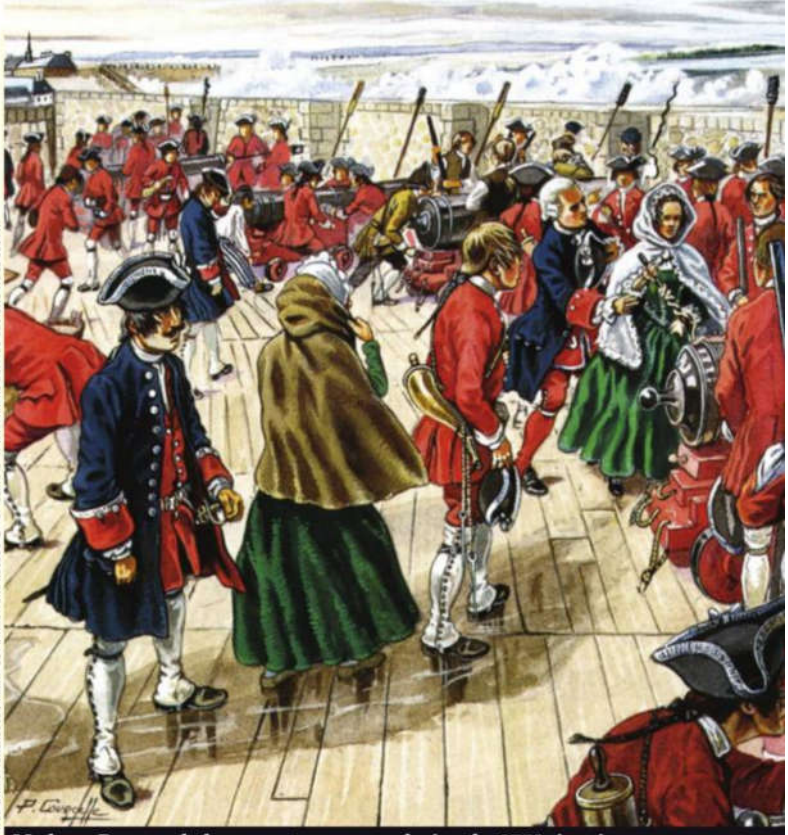

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Madame Drucour helps operate a cannon during the 1758 siege in this illustration by Patrice Courcelle of Osprey Publishing.

A WOMAN OF GRACE AND GRIT

Among the celebrated defenders of Louisbourg was Marie-Anne Aubert de Courserac, the wife of Governor Drucour. She was one of the few upper-class women to leave France and come live in the often cool and damp fortress. The wives of most governors, engineers, and other high-ranking officials preferred to stay in France.

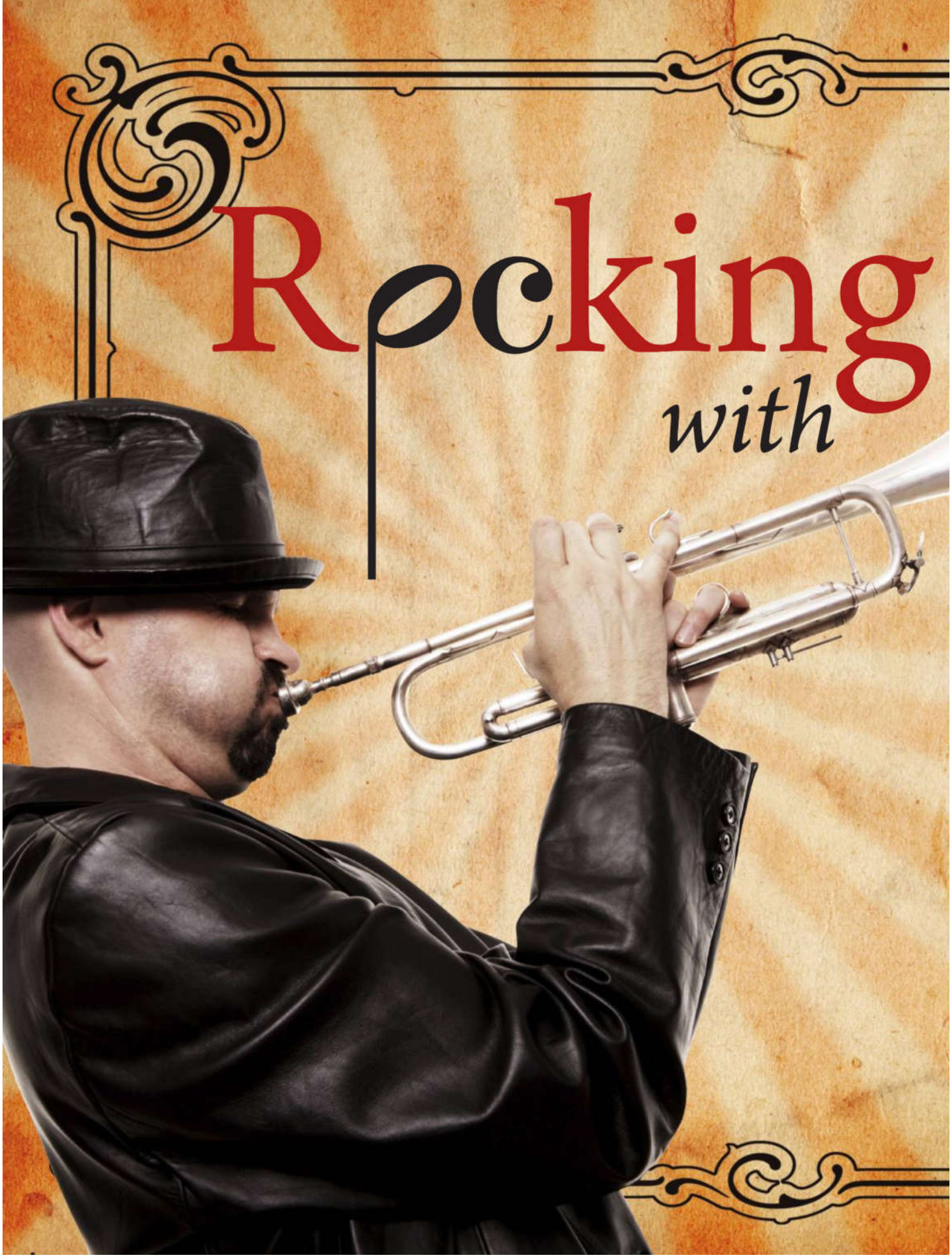
Madame Drucour is most famous for walking the ramparts during the siege and firing three symbolic cannon blasts every day to boost the morale of the French defenders.

Madame Drucour was evidently highly regarded by both sides. "She was a woman of intelligence, gracious towards every one, and succeeded in making Government House extremely attractive," states John Stewart McLennan, a former senator and author of *Louisbourg* (1918).

Ten days after the British landing on June 8, and one day before the first of the siege batteries would open fire, British Major-General Jeffery Amherst sent Madame Drucour two pineapples from the West Indies, and expressed regret for any inconvenience she might be suffering. She responded by sending Amherst a basket with fifty bottles of Burgundy wine.

After the surrender, the governor's wife acted as a mediator between the British officers and the French captives, doing what she could to ease the discomforts of the latter.

The Drucours sailed from Louisbourg on August 15, 1758, four years after their arrival. Later, while Governor Drucour was still a prisoner in England, Madame Drucour defended her husband's reputation to the ministry of marine and forwarded his journal of the siege. She died in 1762, two months after her husband. —**N.O.**


Rocking
with

Ragtime

A musical craze swept into Canada from the black saloons of the American Midwest, setting a brilliant Quebec composer on a thrilling new path. *by Ray Argyle*

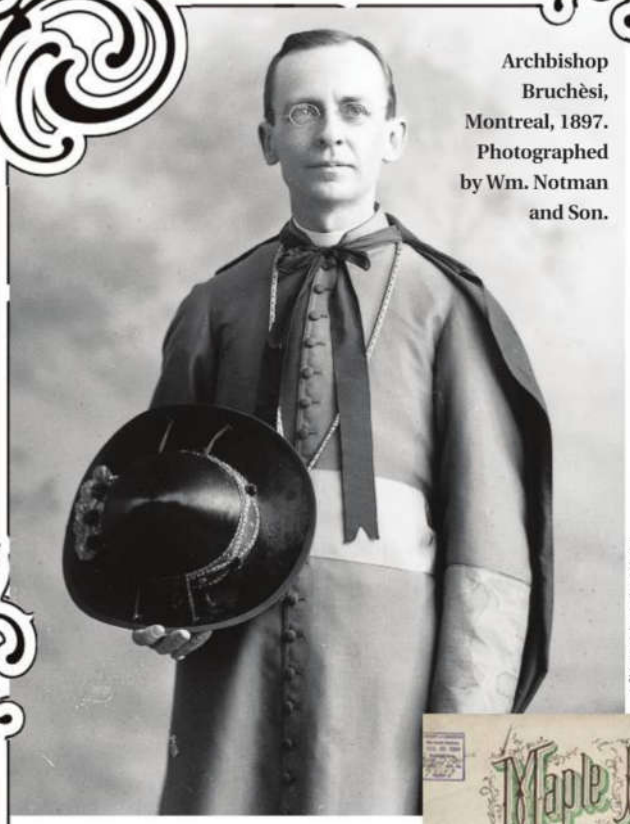
The tables and bars of the Café Eldorado, usually filled with customers eating and drinking their way through an evening of boisterous song and dance, were empty and silent as twenty-six-year-old Jean-Baptiste Lafrenière collected his sheet music from the piano of this Montreal bistro on a May evening in 1901. The Eldorado, like similar establishments in the downtown neighbourhoods of Saint Lawrence Boulevard, had been ordered closed in a morality crusade orchestrated by the Archbishop of Montreal. Quite suddenly, Lafrenière, who would eventually become known as the "national Strauss of Canada," found himself out of a job.

Jean-Baptiste Lafrenière

BIBLIOTHÈQUES ET ARCHIVES NATIONALES DU QUÉBEC

Lafrenière, like other entertainers of his time and place, was the victim of a campaign to clean up Montreal's rowdy concert cafés. Known as "singing saloons" if they were anglophone, they recruited much of their clientele among the rough merchant sailors and stevedores of the nearby waterfront. Montreal's chief of detectives, André Carpenter, wrote in a letter to city council that the concert cafés "have a fascination for mechanics and labourers, who patronize them, and who are lulled into a state of indifference by the cheap plays which are produced and by the associations formed there, and as a result neglect their wives and families." He called for "exceptional measures" to restore morality to the district.

This was music to the ears of Montreal's new archbishop, Monsignor Paul Bruchési, who



Archbishop Bruchèsi, Montreal, 1897. Photographed by Wm. Notman and Son.

MCCORD MUSEUM / II-120149.1

was determined to maintain Catholic church control over popular culture and morality in Quebec. The result was a crackdown under an old bylaw that forbade theatrical performances in places licensed to sell liquor.

The closure of the Eldorado was cause for concern to the energetic and talented Lafrenière — where was he likely to find another job?

The answer, as it turned out, would come from the strange new music that was sweeping north from the black saloons of the American Midwest and would soon engulf, not just Montreal, but all of Canada.

The new music was ragtime.

Filled with raucous sounds that sprang from a mixed heritage of African drums, Caribbean dance rhythms and white folk tunes, ragtime first found a home in the bordellos and saloons of the American Midwest. African-American piano players like Scott Joplin pounded out rhythms that matched their foot stomping and body slapping tempos.

Some have pegged the period from the turn of the century to World War I as the ragtime era. In Canada, it began with Klondike miners struggling to haul supplies up the Chilkoot Pass in 1898. Alongside them were entrepreneurs who packed piano parts on their backs to the saloons of Dawson City. There, fortunes in gold dust changed hands as bank clerk Robert Service wrote his way to fame with verses about how "the jag-time kid was hitting a jag-time tune."

Ragtime was great music for both listening and dancing and by the turn of the twentieth century it had spilled out of the saloons and into the parlours of decent white homes all over North America. Expressed in the parlance of today, Canada was rockin' with ragtime.

The classically trained Lafrenière, who grew up in small-town Quebec under the heavy constraints of the Catholic church, fell in love with this raucous new music that was so different from anything he had ever heard. Up to then he had been composing music for traditional Quebec chansons that spoke of ice frolics, moonlight, and the love of family. A former chapel master at the cathedral in Joliette, Quebec, where he had composed some well-regarded religious works (he lost that position in a conflict with priests over his interest in secular music), Lafrenière was evidently not afraid to launch his career in a completely new direction.

He had no doubt of his ability to master ragtime's unique use of syncopation, a technique in which the emphasis in a tune is shifted to its normally unaccented weak beat, usually in two/four time. He had heard enough ragtime, especially Scott Joplin's first big hit, *Maple Leaf Rag*, to know that this was a sophisticated and complex music that belied its modest origins at the gritty edges of the American musical proletariat. Still, Lafrenière may have had his doubts.

At the time, moral anxieties about ragtime raged across Canada. Churches condemned it, editorialists criticized it, musicians' unions passed resolutions against it. Indeed, Canadian members of the American Federation of Musicians voted along with their U.S. brethren in 1901 "to play no ragtime and do all in their power to counteract the pernicious influence ... of the Negro school."

According to Toronto's *Globe*, ragtime "was not musical, and it was vitiating and vulgar to permit such a thing." A *Globe* review of a new operetta declared it "a veritable pleasure ... to escape the monotonous tyranny of ragtime and two-steps which have formed the basis of so many of the comic opera productions which have of late years been presented in Toronto."

When *The Red Moon*, a musical featuring the unlikely plot of an Indian princess kidnapped by an African-American family and headlined by the black conductor James Reese Europe, played in Toronto in 1909, the *Globe* took pains to reassure staid theatregoers that "the music is not all ragtime."

Ragtime seemed to be more readily accepted in England. When the Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VIII, visited Canada in 1919, the *Manitoba Free Press* reported from Halifax that the Prince insisted on having ragtime played at a formal dance.

If Lafrenière had any misgivings about ragtime, they may have weakened once he found himself out of work with the closing of the Café Eldorado. He was forced for a time to exist on occasional jobs playing music halls and teaching piano and violin to any students he could sign up at twenty-five cents a lesson. Still single, he lived in a small room in an east-end rooming house and spent most of his time haunting the various musical theatres that provided decidedly more sedate entertainment than had been offered by the concert cafés. It was while playing at such venues as the Théatre des Nouveautés, Théatre National and Théatre francais that he began to experiment with ragtime.

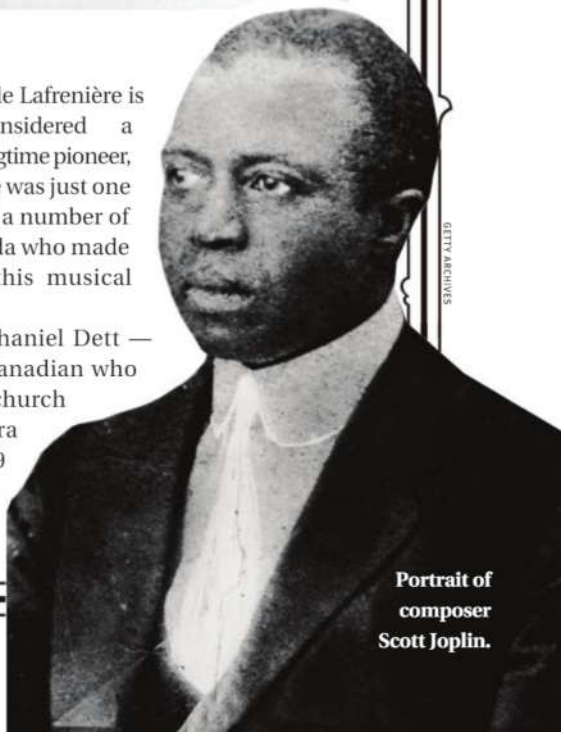
Lafrenière even began to give his image a makeover at this time, cultivating an elaborate handlebar mustache, a well-waxed growth that took him several years to bring into full flower.

Lafrenière began writing rags around 1905 and he worked at a frenetic pace, as if realizing he might not have long to live. Between 1903 and 1912 he wrote thirteen waltzes, an orchestral overture, and eight romantic songs. But it was playing and writing ragtime that filled his days and nights. Some of his most popular rags included *Balloon Rag, Taxi Rag and Raggity Rag.* Other memorable numbers included *Hip! Hip! Hourra!, Silly–Ass,* and *Ben,* a two-step composition for orchestra.

BIBLIOTHEQUE ET ARCHIVES NATIONALES DU QUEBEC

While Lafrenière is considered a ragtime pioneer, he was just one of a number of musicians in Canada who made their mark with this musical genre.

There was Nathaniel Dett — a young African-Canadian who had been a boy church organist in Niagara Falls — who in 1899 wrote *After the Cake Walk.* It was a


GETTY ARCHIVES

Portrait of composer Scott Joplin.

May Irwin, circa 1910.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

lightly syncopated and rhythmic piece in the ragtime march tradition.

There was Joseph Lamb, who was from New Jersey but published his first ragtime tunes in Canada when he was a student St. Jerome's College in Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario. Lamb went on to become — along with Joplin and James Scott — one of the three great masters of ragtime.

And there was Willie Eckstein, a four-foot-nine-inch musical prodigy from the Montreal working class district of Pointe St-Charles. Known in his teens as "The Boy Paderewski," he earned $15,000 in a year as a touring pianist. He then settled in at Montreal's Strand Theatre, where he was advertised as "the world's foremost motion picture interpreter." Eckstein went on to write or co-write both rags and patriotic songs, including *Delirious Rag* and *Perpetual Rag* and the World War I hit, *Good-bye Soldier Boy.*

The seamier side of ragtime was displayed by May Irwin of Whitby, Ontario, who gained fame on the New York stage for her racist and vulgar "coon" songs, which at the time were regarded as amusing. She was more notable, however, for being one of the first persons ever filmed in a kissing scene, in the silent movie *The Kiss.*

As for Lafrenière, his last ragtime composition — *John Chow Chow Rag* — was published in 1912. His life was cut short when he died of tuberculosis on January 4, 1912, at the age of thirty-seven. He left behind his widow, Victoria Danis, and two young daughters.

Nearly every member of the Montreal Union of Musicians attended his funeral and witnessed his burial in the family plot in Côte-des-Neiges cemetery in Montreal. The music periodical *Le Passe-Temps* hailed him in death as "a master of light music, writing with inspiration and ease."

Within a few years, the world was caught up in its first global conflict and by its end, the strains of jazz — brought north from New Orleans by a white quartet — offered a new sound to a generation weary of tradition and war. Lafrenière was gone and ragtime king Scott Joplin died of syphilis in 1917, a week before the United States entered the war. The ragtime era died with them.

RAGTIME TODAY

Canada's ragtime traditions are being kept alive today by many enthusiasts, notably Jack Hutton of Bala, Ontario. Hutton, recipient of the Bob Darch Memorial Award at the 2006 Grand International Ragtime/Jasstime Festival in Alexandria Bay, New York, says "people today have a lot of mistaken ideas about ragtime. To some, it conjures up images of spittoons, musicians in striped shirts, and a partly-inebriated piano player working an out-of-tune piano. In the technical demands ragtime puts on a player, it is the exact opposite. It is closer to chamber music than any other genre."

In Montreal, Mimi Blais is hailed as the Queen of Ragtime who rediscovered of the works of Jean-Baptiste Lafrenière. Her CD, *Made in Quebec*, contains sixteen of his compositions. **—R.A.**

Ray Argyle is the author of *The Ragtime Chronicles: Scott Joplin, His Music and How His Generation Changed the Culture of the World*. He lives in Toronto.

Et Cetera

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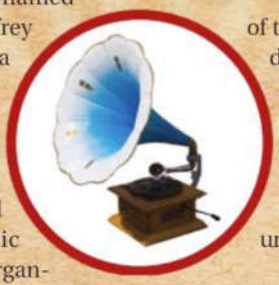
SOUNDS OF THE CITIES

Canada's turn-of-the-twentieth-century urban music scene was hopping with the new tunes of the street. *by Peter Steven*

Ever wonder who reigned as Canada's pop music king a hundred years ago? One energetic fellow named Herbert Henry Godfrey would have stood a good chance of winning that crown. Godfrey had his finger on the patriotic and sentimental pulse. He had worked for piano and sheet-music companies, toiled as a church organist, and played numerous turns in vaudeville outfits. His big hit of 1897, *Land of the Maple*, along with the French version, *Le pays de l'érable*, sold an astounding 100,000 sheet-music copies.



But Godfrey and other Canadian pop artists of the past don't receive a lot of attention these days. While Canada's serious classical music has been much studied by music historians, and rural folk music is familiar to many Canadians — think, or rather, hum a few bars of *The Red River Valley*, *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, or *Farewell to Nova Scotia* — urban pop generally draws a blank.

What has been missing in this musical history is everything in that great realm between the very serious and the very folk — that is, the popular sounds of the cities, especially

in those years just before the Great War, 1896–1914. It was music to accompany the new mass entertainments — vaudeville, film, organized sports, streetcars, the bicycle, roller rinks — as Canada's young cities doubled and tripled in size.

The melodies of urban popular music undoubtedly reflected the new social and economic challenges that went along with rapid growth. They also went hand in hand with the new freedoms and extra leisure time away from the farm.

Popular music between 1896 and 1914 covered a broad range. Much of it was simple music easily played by amateurs, such as marches and ballads for street bands and sentimental parlour songs, or comic airs for lone pianos. But a good portion of this music also comprised sophisticated compositions that required expert playing skills.

It wafted up from the streets, careening out from the vaudeville and burlesque houses. In the Western cities the music blew in with the new Wild West shows. To the young generation, this was not their parent's folk music for fiddle and barn dance.

SONGS OF WAR

Perhaps the most widespread musical genre from this time was the patriotic. Many hundreds of songs and poems extolled the virtues of the Canadian landscape, such as *A Handful of Maple Leaves* by William Westbrook, written during the Boer War, or Herbert Godfrey's *Way Up in Fair Muskoka*. Other works in the patriotic mode boost the British Empire, or specifically praise the fortunes of Canadian soldiers and their wars. At the end of this period the patriotic shifted with full force into recruiting songs for the Great War.

The common denominator for many songwriters was the challenge of finding a fresh rhyming scheme for "Canuck." In his 1910 composition *Jack Canuck*, Ravenor Bullen solved it thus:

"If you want to meet a man who stands
out far above the ruck,
Come along, my lad, come a-long.
For I'd like to introduce you to my
friend Old Jack Canuck."

Joseph Scriven

THE SPIRIT OF THE TIME

Spiritual music also made its mark. *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* (with lyrics by Joseph Scriven in 1855 and music by Charles Converse in 1868) must rank as the best-known example of the spiritual among a general audience. Scriven was quite a character. He moved to Canada from Ireland as a young man and settled near Rice Lake, Ontario, where he developed a reputation as being eccentric. He drowned in mysterious circumstances, predeceased by two fiancées, one of whom also drowned.

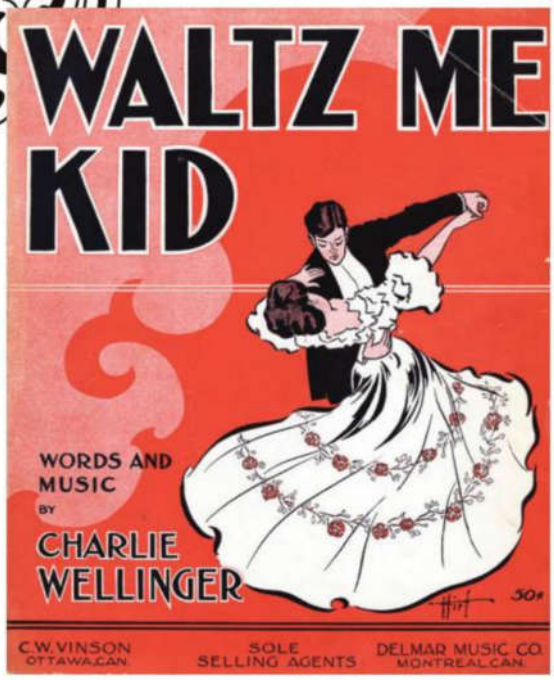
African-Canadian hymns and spirituals, some composed by singers or church leaders in Nova Scotia and western Ontario, were very popular. However, Canadian sheet music publishers apparently had no interest in it and it remained largely unrecorded.

By Geoffrey O'Hara March 16, 1918.

White evangelists also wrote new forms of spiritual music. The best-known Canadian composers were John and David Whyte of Paris, Ontario, whose anthologies, *Sing Out the Glad News* (1885) and *Battle Songs of the Cross* (1901), circulated widely in book and sheet-music form and invariably set the congregations rolling.

POP GOES THE MUSIC

The musical genre with the most specific references to place and setting during this era



By Charlie Wellinger, 1910.

could best be described as canpop. These contemporary tunes, or old chestnuts with up-to-date lyrics, were meant to be enjoyed solely as entertainment.

Charles Wellinger (1888-1943) performed regularly with Hamilton's Royal Connaught Winter Garden Dance Orchestra. *Waltz Me Kid* (1910) became his biggest hit but other tunes capture the canpop spirit quite nicely. His *Come With Me For a Roller Skate* (1907) gave us that memorable Canadian phrase, "It's awfully nice you don't need any ice."

These proudly commercial forms were not confined to the East. During the Yukon gold rush of 1898, William Diefenbaker, an Ontario teacher and the father of John, Canada's thirteenth prime minister, penned a true canpop number known as *Rush to the Klondike*. The new metropolis of Dawson was awash in this sort of thing during its heyday.

Dawson City was also awash in ragtime (See accompanying article "Rockin' With Ragtime"), which roared into Canada from the American Midwest. It exploded onto the scene unannounced and within a flash was everywhere. Canadian audiences heard it almost immediately as U.S. performers toured in their regular cross-border circuits. A sophisticated, hard-to-play music that only sounded easy, ragtime represents the first truly modern music because it started to blur the line between amateur and connoisseur.

NOT ON THE RECORD

The years between 1896 and 1914 mark a transition in the history of popular music. On the one hand, it was characterized by modern songs, commercial publishing, and a large urban audience. But this was not yet a period of mass distribution. The world was just beginning the age of recording and the magic of radio had not yet arrived.

For those who wanted to learn for themselves, sheet music companies and music teachers could be found everywhere. Their ads jumped out from newspapers each week. Together with the instrument and piano makers, the music culture of a hundred years ago encouraged active participation. For instance, in November 1912, a special music issue in the weekly *Canadian Courier* boasted that Canadian companies produced 30,000 pianos in 1912, a figure that had more than doubled since 1900. At least thirty companies employed about 5,000 people.

In fact, a Montreal piano factory was where Godfrey, our turn-of-the-century pop star, got his start. Godfrey went on to become immensely popular in his time. His *Land of the Maple*, with its unifying lyrics ("The Rose and the Thistle, the Shamrock and the 'Lis' all bloom in one garden 'neath the maple tree") was sung by a generation of patriotic school children.

Yet Godfrey, like many of his contemporaries, has faded into obscurity and remains largely unknown today.

Peter Steven is the author of *The No-Nonsense Guide to Global Media* (published by Between the Lines), and thanks his mum and dad for the piano lessons a long time ago.

Go behind the story with The Beaver's podcast interview with Peter Steven, at thebeaver.ca

Et Cetera

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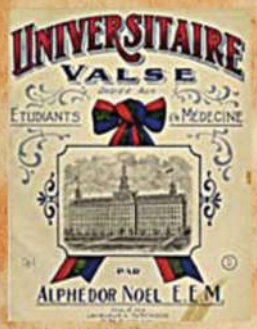
CANADA'S H

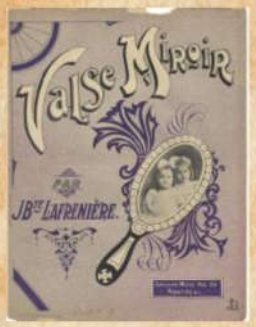
From waltzes, to rags, to military marches, Canadian



by Alphédor Noël, 1906.

by J.B. Lafrenière, 1907.

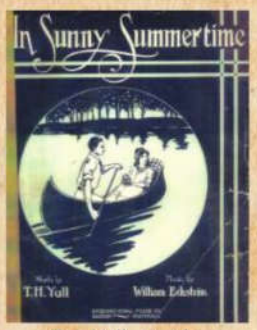
by Joseph St. John, 1910.



by J.B. Lafrenière, 1907.

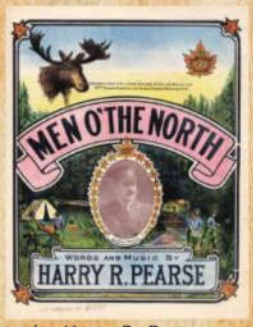
Nellie M. Morrison, words, Astor Johnstone, music, 1921.

by N. Dyer Hurdon, 1917.



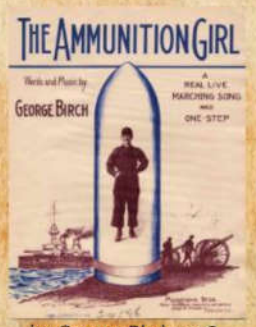
T.H. Yull, words, William Eckstein, music, 1911.

Walter Bruce, words, Wm. Eckstein and Harry Thomas, music, 1917.



by Harry R. Pearse, 1916.

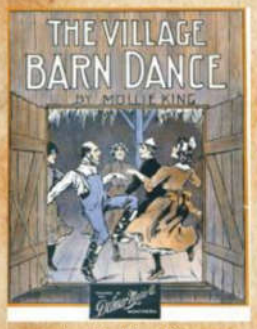
by Fred S. Stone, 1902.



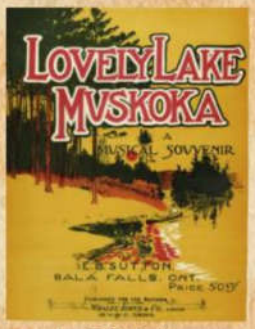
by George Birch,1918.

IT PARADE

sheet music covers are snapshots of a bygone age.



by Mollie King, 1909.



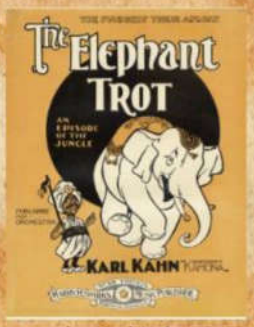
by E.B. Sutton, 1903.

by Phil Goldberg, 1915.

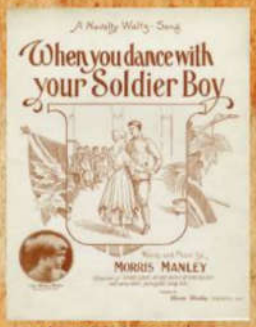
by Fred S. Stone, 1899.

by Fred S. Stone, 1901.

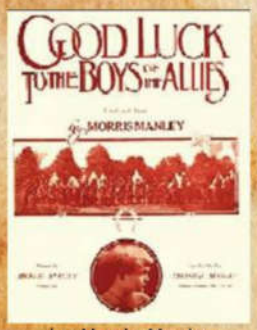
by Fred S. Stone, 1908.



by Karl Kahn, 1904.



by Morris Manley, 1916.



by Morris Manley, 1915.

by Harry Moore, 1908.

by Charles Wellinger, 1907.

Free music downloads at thebeaver.ca.

SHEET MUSIC COVERS COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

The town
of Oil Springs,
circa 1867.

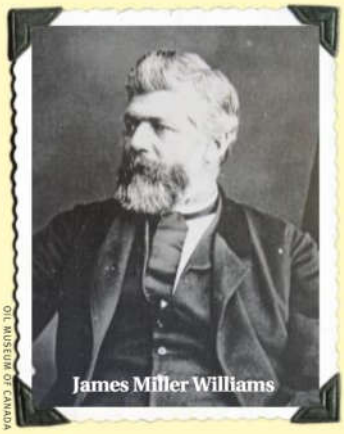
ONTARIO'S LIVING DINOSAUR

Think the modern oil industry got its start in Texas, or Saudi Arabia, or Alberta? Think again. Think Lambton County in southwestern Ontario.

by Gary May

The man dug, sinking the blade of his shovel deep into the foul-smelling muck that oozed around his boots. Bending into the shovel for leverage when the saturated ground resisted his efforts, he gained a purchase on a clump of the sodden, gritty material. With a mighty heave, he lifted the goo from the ground and tossed it onto the heap that was growing amidst a small crowd who watched his progress.

The group had trudged deep into the dank swamps of still-unsettled central Lambton County in Ontario (then Canada West). One seemed a bit of a dandy — a Hamilton wagon maker with greying whiskers. Was he possibly a businessman, grown soft behind a desk in the city? Perhaps, yet here he stood in this frontier wasteland, eagerly awaiting the result of this excavation.



OIL MUSEUM OF CANADA

James Miller Williams

The man was James Miller Williams. He had come to this spot where he had been told a sulphurous black substance seeped to the surface and congealed to a gum. He was eager to learn what it was he and his partners had gotten themselves into when they purchased the land. A trickle of black began to ooze from the bottom of the hole the labourer dug and a grin came to Williams' face.

"Gentlemen," he said, "we have found it."

This is a dramatization of Williams' first encounter with oil. It took place in the summer — likely July — of 1858. By August, newspapers were reporting that the oil was being barrelled up and sent to Hamilton for refining. By December, agents in Sarnia and London were selling the refined product — kerosene. So, in quick order, Williams

Right: Oil rig workers in Petrolia, circa 1903.

ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO/10003310

was mining, refining, and marketing a petroleum product — something no one in North America had done before.

The discovery near what is now Oil Springs represents "the beginning of the worldwide modern oil industry," according to Emory Kemp, an American industrial archeologist who has made a career out of researching early industrial sites. He thinks it should be a UNESCO World Heritage Site. However, that view is not unanimous, as there are other places that lay claim to being first. (See accompanying story "Slippery Distinctions.")

As the second most common liquid on the planet, people have known about oil for millennia. They found it in swamps, wells, and other places where it made its way to the surface through fissures in rock. They used the substance to waterproof boats, caulk stone buildings, and to try to cure whatever ailed them. In fact, local aboriginals had long utilized the oil of Lambton County's "gum beds" for medicinal purposes.

One of the first white settlers to take an interest in Lambton County's oil was herbalist Andrew Lucas. Travelling from Beckwith Township near Ottawa, he had aboriginal guides lead him to the site in 1835. Once there, he spread a woolen blanket over the ground to soak up the oil, then wrung out the blanket into containers.

It is not known exactly what Lucas did with the crude. But family lore suggests his clothing reeked so badly from the sulphurous petroleum that on the return trip innkeepers banished him from their doorways.

Two decades later, when Williams made his trek to the still wild and unsettled region, he smelled an opportunity that went far beyond odiferous rock-oil potions. The world was changing. The industrial revolution and an increase in literacy had fuelled demand for light. At the time, lamps were powered mainly by whale oil. But whales were hard to hunt and their oil became prohibitively expensive as demand soared. Alcohol, turpentine, and other lamp fuels were either too smoky or too dangerous.

Then, in 1846, Nova Scotia geologist and chemist Abraham Gesner made a world-changing discovery: he

OIL MUSEUM OF CANADA

Right: Having started in London, Ontario, Imperial Oil's office moved to Petrolia, where this photo was taken, before moving again, this time to Sarnia.

found a way to turn liquefied coal into a burning fuel, which he called kerosene. That invention was perfected seven years later in Poland when chemist Ignacy Lukasiewicz made kerosene from "seep oil" — or petroleum. Overnight, petroleum became a hot commodity. The race was now on to find a steady supply.

Petroleum, while plentiful, was difficult to extract. People had usually collected it in small quantities from the surface. But Williams, by digging down deep enough — fifteen and a half metres — hit on a steady flow, an underground river of oil. Oil could now be collected in quantities not even imagined before.

Williams' discovery sparked a stampede of fortune seekers to what became known as Oil Springs. Newspapers painted it as a Wild West frontier town and nicknamed it "the city of grease" or just "Olicia." Workers rented beds in shifts in boarding houses that sprang up overnight on the main street. Whisky flowed ceaselessly, no doubt taking the edge off the horrible living conditions. An eyewitness account found in the Lambton Library described life in Oil Springs' this way:

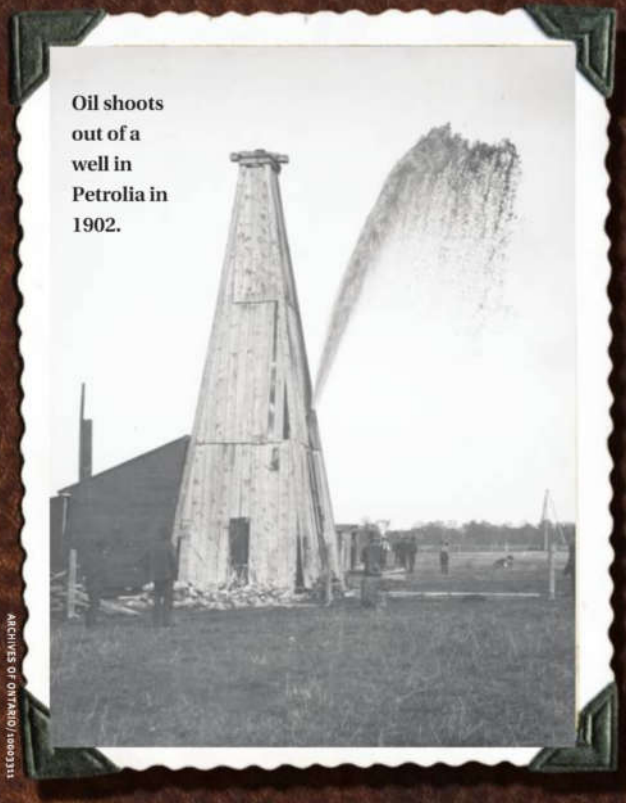
> "Close by the principal hotel there runs a small sluggish flowing stream. In it, diggers covered with oil washed their dirty selves after the day's work, swilled the mud off their boots and quenched the thirst of their horses. From this ditch also was regularly procured the water of which the tea and coffee were made and in which the salt pork, the staple article of food for many long months, was boiled."

The early petroleum industry was raw and dangerous. When drillers struck a gusher, oil flowed across the landscape, fouling creeks and rivers, many of which routinely caught fire. In the *Tweedsmuir History of Oil Springs*, a Mrs. A.J. Yates recalled a fire on Black Creek:

> "The fire, which made a terrific blaze, the smoke which could be seen in London, threatened to run all the way (downriver) to Wilkesport. But after many trees were felled, fresh sods cut and used with clay to make a barricade, it was put out. Many amusing stories were told of geese, pigs, cattle and sheep that went to the (burning) river to bathe."

Then there were the nitroglycerine factories, which gave the boomtown its boom. Oil workers used nitroglycerine to make bombs that were dropped into wells to make them flow better. The little nitro plants often blew up because workers were careless in handling the unstable liquid. In April 1891, the *Advertiser*, a Petrolia newspaper, reported on the worst of the nitro plant explosions:

> "Some 40 or 50 people were employed in gathering together the scattered fragments of what a few short hours earlier were three living healthy human beings.



Oil shoots out of a well in Petrolia in 1902.

ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO/10003311

WHAT MAKES A GUSHER GUSH?

The classic image of an oil strike is that of a gusher shooting into the air, creating an out-of-control fountain of black crude. Such scenes, known as blowouts, were common during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century era of oil exploration, when technology was not available to control the tremendously strong flow.

Blowouts happened when drill heads pierced into petroleum reservoirs that were under high pressure. Because petroleum is less dense than water and rock, it tends to flow upward through cracks and fissures. But sometimes impermeable rock blocks its passage and it collects in a pocket or reservoir. Over time, more sediments can collect, pushing down on the oil and leading to overpressure.

Drilling into such reservoirs was dangerous and wasteful. Workmen involved in drilling were sometimes killed or injured, equipment was ruined, and the oil could flow uncontrollably for days, polluting waterways and ruining land. The first successful blowout preventer — a valve at the wellhead that could be closed in the event of a high-pressure eruption — came out in 1924. Gushers are now largely a thing of history.

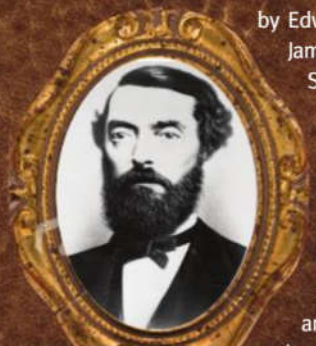
Titusvile, Pennsylvania, has long billed itself as home to North America's 'first oil well'.

CORBIS

SLIPPERY DISTINCTIONS

Ontario's Lambton County is holding a long list of celebrations this year to mark the "150th anniversary of the first commercial oil well in North America." However, the importance of the site at Oil Springs, which some believe should be declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has been a point of contention.

For many years, Titusville, Pennsylvania, has gushed about its status as "North America's first oil well," which was drilled by Edwin Drake in 1859. This was a full year after James Miller Williams hand dug his well in Oil Springs, near Petrolia, and sparked an oil rush. When pressed, Titusville boosters amend the claim to say it was the first oil well *drilled* in North America.



Edwin L. Drake

The idea that the world's modern oil industry got its start in southwestern Ontario — suggested by American industrial archeologist Emory Kemp — is also open for argument. Titusville also makes that claim, as does the Eurasian republic of Azerbaijan, where Russian engineer F.N. Semyenov in 1848 drilled the world's first modern oil well ("modern" meaning not dug by hand). There are even claims that the Chinese were first in the drilling department, when, in 347 A.D., they used bits attached to bamboo poles to extract oil from depths of more than 244 metres.

But some say it all started in Poland, where Ignacy Lukasiewicz — the enterprising pharmacist who distilled kerosene from raw petroleum in 1853 — formed a partnership to open an oil well in 1854, and established a refinery in 1856.

Kemp is familiar with Lukasiewicz's work but stands by his argument that the "industry" began in southwestern Ontario.

"Other people played around with (oil), but the evidence is very strong that it all started as an industry in the Petrolia area," he says. "You've got to emphasize 'industry,' as opposed to something else."

Not that any of this debate will stem the flow of Lambton County's celebrations. For information on the web, go to www.2008celebrate.com.

It was a sickening sight to see all those men with two pieces of shingle in their hands, each bearing some infinitesimal piece of human flesh or bone, a piece of broken rib here, a part of a skull covering there."

But young men have often scoffed at danger. A generation before the Klondike's Chilkoot Trail beckoned thrill-seekers and fortune hunters, Lambton's oil fields were littered with tales of wealth as well as tragedy. The story of Hugh Nixon Shaw contains a bit of both.

Shaw was a Bible-thumping Methodist whose exploits earned for him the sobriquet "that insane Yankee." At Oil Springs in January of 1862, he drilled the deepest well anyone had ever known — beyond sixty metres — and struck Canada's first gusher. The roar of this great fountain of oil could be heard for kilometres around. All of a sudden the "insane Yankee" was "that gentleman," eagerly sought by newspapermen across Ontario.

At the time, Shaw must have felt on top of the world. Someone offered him $10,000 for his well, but he rejected it. A short time later, in February 1863, a mechanical problem developed in his well. Climbing down to take care of it himself, he was overcome by toxic fumes and fell to his death. The oilman's run at riches had lasted little more than a year.

The coming of the railway played a major role in Oil Springs' rapid rise. In the very year Williams found his flow of oil, the railway was extended to the village of Wyoming, sixteen kilometres away. That said, it was still sixteen kilometres of howling wilderness with no decent roads. In order to transport the oil, workers put barrels of crude onto stone boats — flat-bottomed sledges pulled by oxen — and dragged them north to the rail depot. From there they went to refineries in Hamilton, and later London. In winter, sleighs made the trek tolerable; in summer, the roadway became a river of mud. Oxen sometimes sank to their bellies in the glistening muck.

By 1866, Oil Springs had grown to four thousand people. It had banks, stores, bakeries, butcher shops, hotels, and saloons. Stagecoaches were on the move night and day.

Despite its rough and tumble image, and the presence of just one police constable, there were few reports of lawlessness. There was, however, one notable exception. An ugly racist incident took place on a Saturday night in March of 1863. About a hundred oilmen, all white and likely fuelled with liquor, armed themselves with wooden clubs and iron pipes and advanced on the black section of town. The reason: A black driller had reportedly committed a perceived slight against a white woman of some standing. Four or five black families were driven from their shanties and beaten, their homes set on fire. There were no reports of deaths. Nine of the hooligans were eventually arrested but five or six of them escaped.

While Oil Springs grew almost overnight into a booming frontier community, its fall was equally swift.

By 1867, nine years after Williams dug the first well, the area's wells began to run dry. New strikes were being routinely made a few kilometres north in Petrolia, which soon supplanted Oil Springs as the hub of the region's oil industry. One by one, Oil Springs' twelve general stores and nine hotels and saloons shut their doors. Today 750 people make it their home.

Eventually, Petrolia, which was a bustling town in its heyday, and still boasts a magnificent opera house and streets lined with beautiful mansions, would also fade into obscurity. By the end of the nineteenth century, the world's growing thirst for crude made it clear the region could not compete with strikes in the United States and other places. However, the impact of Lambton County's pioneer oil industry was felt worldwide, since many of its oil men went abroad and grew wealthy working in places like Saudi Arabia, Russia, and the United States, where their expertise in finding and extracting oil was in high demand.

Today, few are aware of the seminal part Ontario's Lambton County played in building an international industry. Even Emory Kemp, the archeologist, had never heard of the place. The director of the Institute for the History of Technology and Industrial Archaeology at the University of West Virginia, Kemp happened upon Oil Springs during a 1999 road trip in southern Ontario. He spied a highway sign pointing to the Oil Museum of Canada. Curious, Kemp took a detour and came across an unbelievable sight — no less than a working oil field run with the same machinery that was used *a century and a half ago.*

What particularly fascinated him was the use of something called the jerker line system, a strange Victorian-era contraption in which a single engine is connected to a large horizontal wheel that is in turn connected to lines that radiate out as far as hundreds of metres. Each line is connected to a pump over an oil well. As the engine chugs away, the jerker lines move back and forth to turn the cranks on the oil well pumps.

John Henry Fairbank first employed the system in the early 1860s. Kemp believes he adapted it from a system used in German salt mines that perhaps goes back as far as the sixteenth century.

After his first encounter with Oil Springs, Kemp obtained United States government funding and returned with a team to produce drawings of sites and equipment. They collected archival evidence that he hopes will confirm his assertion that the area is key to the understanding of how the modern oil industry began and how the technology evolved.

Fairbank's great-grandson, Charles Fairbank III, continues to operate the oil field using the same methods and equipment as his ancestor. Fairbank Oil Properties in Oil Springs, created 147 years ago, is likely the oldest continuously operated oil firm in the world. Traditional jerker lines connect 240 of its 340 producing wells, which draw 24,000 barrels of crude annually — about sixty-five barrels a day. Imperial Oil in nearby Sarnia purchases and refines the local crude.

As one of a dozen producers still operating in Lambton County, Charles Fairbank is determined to see the tradition continue. He describes the business as "a living dinosaur." As the largest of the remaining Lambton producers, Charles Fairbank believes that he and the others who make the effort to keep their businesses operating are caretakers.

ROLLING IN OIL

Canada's petroleum reserves today are second only to Saudi Arabia.

A: SAUDI ARABIA (266.7*)
B: CANADA (178.5)
C: IRAN (138.4)
D: IRAQ (115)
E: KUWAIT (104)

*Amounts are in billions of barrels.
Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

"It's a legacy," he says. "It's in our charge now, and while I'm here, it's my duty to do what I can for it."

When we think about petroleum, we think of Alberta, or Texas or Saudi Arabia. Yet this mammoth industry upon which we all rely so heavily today began in the swampy backwoods of southwestern Ontario near Sarnia. And incredibly, everything the pioneers left "is still here," says Fairbank. "This is the first [commercial] oil field in the world. And it's still running with original technology."

Gary May is a freelance writer in Cobourg, Ontario, and author of the 1998 book, *Hard Oiler! The Story of Early Canadians' Quest for Oil at Home and Abroad.*

Et Cetera

Canada West's Last Frontier: A History of Lambton by John Turnbull Elford. Lambton County Historical Society, Sarnia, Ontario, 1982.

Petroleum in Canada by Victor Ross. Southam Press, Toronto, 1917.

Rivers of Oil by Hope Morritt. Quarry Press, Kingston, Ontario, 1993.

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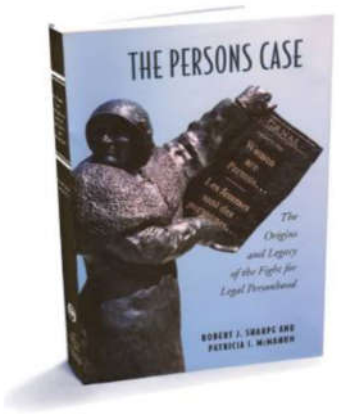


FIGHTING WORDS

The Persons Case: The Origins and Legacy of the Fight for Legal Personhood
by Robert J. Sharpe and Patricia I. McMahon
University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2007
272 pp., illus., $50 hardcover

There is a tendency among those unfamiliar with women's history to chuckle at the mere mention of the Persons Case. The notion of going all the way to the Privy Council of Britain to find out if women were persons seems amusing, at least on the surface. When talk turns to what the case was fought for — appointment to the Senate — there is a tendency to titter because, well, the Senate is a fossil of an institution, as everyone knows. The Senate as girl power — what were they thinking?

One of the most compelling reasons to read *The Persons Case* is to find out what drove the women known as the Famous Five to fight to open the Senate's doors. Readers also discover why the verdict remains one of the most important constitutional decisions in Canadian history.

What Patricia I. McMahon and Robert J. Sharpe chronicle, however, is no mere legal story. Rather, they have created a gripping drama in which the fitness of women's appointment to the Senate is merely the backdrop. At the heart of this tale is not Canada's constitutional landscape, but the characters whose agendas drive the plot. You're hardly aware it's a book about Canadian law.

Emily Murphy was an Edmonton magistrate — becoming the first woman magistrate in the British Empire in 1916 — and she knew very well that she was a person. But she became irritated when lawyers came before her court and challenged her authority, arguing that, as a woman, she was unfit to hold public office under the British North America Act.

The simple way to prove them wrong would be to convince Prime Minister Mackenzie King to appoint a woman — specifically, Murphy — to sit in Canada's Red Chamber. Murphy did what anyone seeking a Senate appointment would do: She lobbied and got her friends to lobby on her behalf.

Alberta senators were dying every few years. Yet each time another man was appointed and Murphy's hopes were dashed, her resolve grew. So did the resolve of Canadian women's organizations. Resolutions were passed. Petitions were signed.

And so it was that Murphy joined with four other Alberta feminists — Henrietta Muir Edwards, a successful advocate for women's property rights; the well-known Nellie McClung; Louise McKinney, the first woman elected to the Alberta legislature; and Irene Parlby, president of the United Farm Women's Association. Throughout the 1920s, they led a battle to have the government of Canada appoint a woman to the Senate, in part so that women would be deemed persons in all matters of citizenship and law.

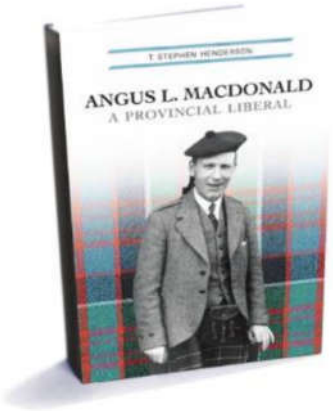
Murphy comes through as a redoubtable protagonist. However, it is the deft use of supporting characters that really moves the book along. Murphy's brother William Ferguson, a lawyer whose expertise was railway law, advised her to ask the government to direct a reference on the matter to the Supreme Court, thereby avoiding a costly case the women had no means to launch.

It turns out there were many progressive-minded men who believed in the cause — men like Department of Justice counsel Eugene Lafleur, who argued that just because the BNA Act referred to senators as "he," that did not mean women could not be senators. The Interpretation Act of 1850, after all, clearly stated that words using a masculine gender were deemed to include females.

In 1928, the Supreme Court declared that women were not qualified as persons who could be appointed to the Senate. Undaunted, the women, represented by Newton Rowell, went to Britain. Victory finally came on October 18, 1929, when the Privy Council determined that the term "persons" in the BNA Act applies to both males and females. Half a century later, the reasoning behind the Persons Case judgment informed the creation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Reading history should always be this much fun.

Reviewed by **Penni Mitchell**, the managing editor of *Herizons* magazine.



MODEST ACCLAIM

Angus L. Macdonald: A Provincial Liberal
by T. Stephen Henderson
University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2007
368 pp., $35 paper

Robert Stanfield, who lost three elections to Pierre Elliot Trudeau, has been described as the best prime minister Canada never had. But few Canadians remember that one of Stanfield's predecessors as premier of Nova Scotia, Angus L. Macdonald, was also a contender for the country's top job.

Macdonald resurrected Nova Scotia's Liberals during the Depression, then went

Reviews

to Ottawa to oversee the dramatic expansion of the Canadian Navy during the Second World War. Prime Minister Mackenzie King, depending on his mood, considered him a threat or a worthy successor, and Macdonald came close to running against Louis St. Laurent when King retired in 1948.

As Stephen Henderson makes clear in his thoughtful biography, Macdonald was a leadership long shot with little hope of being elected prime minister. He was a champion of provincial rights, distrustful of the national press, and his role as a leading advocate for conscription doomed any hope he could preserve the federal Liberals' hegemony in Quebec.

But this is more than a book about a leader the Liberals never had. Henderson traces Macdonald's career from his roots in rural Cape Breton to his postwar return to Halifax, where he resumed the premiership and died in office in 1954, at age 63.

Henderson teaches history at Acadia University in Wolfville, N.S., and this is a scholarly work that views Macdonald through the prism of his political beliefs. Macdonald was convinced the state should help citizens to help themselves. During the Depression, he put the needy to work building and repairing roads, not on the dole. The Canso Causeway and the bridge spanning Halifax Harbour that bears his name, both completed in 1955, are monuments to his policy of investing in infrastructure to stimulate the economy.

Macdonald's spats with Ottawa over provincial rights could be drawn from today's headlines, as could his calls for more money to improve services in have-not provinces. In his day, the battleground was freight rates and coal tariffs; now it's equalization and offshore accords.

Henderson is thorough and meticulous, making this the definitive biography of the man who governed Nova Scotia for 16 years. But his detachment and even-handedness may give Macdonald too much benefit of the doubt. A system of illegal kickbacks swelled provincial Liberal coffers on his watch, yet Macdonald is portrayed as aloof from it all. Likewise, a man who drafted his own budgets and personally doled out patronage plums — even intervening to ensure a Liberal got the contract to distribute the wine used in Catholic mass — is forgiven for failing to realize, as federal minister for naval services, that Canada's wartime navy was poorly trained and equipped.

Despite his accomplishments, Macdonald was gripped by a fear of failure throughout his political career. He lost his first bid for federal office in 1930 and never fought another election unless he was sure he could win. He refused to run for the leadership of the Nova Scotia Liberals later that year and had to be nominated from the floor. He infuriated King by insisting the Tories not contest his by-election when he joined the wartime federal cabinet.

After the war, he assumed the premiership would be his for the asking. "I would rather see somebody else selected," he told retiring premier Stirling MacMillan, who had minded the store while he was in Ottawa, "than beg for support at a convention." He got his wish and was acclaimed leader — and premier — in 1945.

Episodes such as these permit glimpses of Macdonald's personality. He left detailed diaries but, Henderson notes, "rarely recorded his own opinions." This makes his biographer's task more challenging, and the reader longs for additional colour and drama to bring him to life. Macdonald served in World War One, and just days before the armistice a German sniper shot him through the neck. Both Henderson and the understated Macdonald portray the incident and his miraculous survival as if it were another day at the office.

Macdonald never attained Stanfield's national stature, yet he remains a major figure in the history of Canada. Henderson has given him the recognition he deserves.

Reviewed by **Dean Jobb**, a professor of journalism at the University of King's College in Halifax and author of *The Acadians: A People's Story of Exile and Triumph* (Wiley Canada).

MORE BOOKS

Louis Riel: Firebrand
by Sharon Stewart
XYZ Publishing,
Montreal, 2007
194 pp., illus.,
$17.95 paperback

As Métis and aboriginal land claims figure in the news of today, it is interesting to study history to get a firmer foundation in the basis of these claims. Sharon Stewart's *Louis Riel: Firebrand* is written for young adults but could appeal to a much wider audience. Working from the Métis leader's letters, poems, court transcriptions, and diaries, Stewart shows Riel as a deeply spiritual man who was determined to protect his people's rights to land and self-government.

It may never be known whether his hospitalization in various asylums resulted from a religious vision or, as his lawyers at his trial for treason tried to convince the jury, was instead a consequence of insanity. However, the weaving of this question throughout the narrative provides insight into the ongoing torment and persecution Riel must have endured.

Although its fictional augmentation is sometimes fanciful, overall the book is a poignant and factual documentation giving a glimpse of a well-educated man who was drawn into the political and bureaucratic struggles of his time. **— B. T.**

God's Mercies: Rivalry, Betrayal and the Dream of Discovery
by Douglas Hunter
Doubleday Canada,
Toronto, 2007
432 pp., $34.95 hardcover

The first time I saw *The Last Voyage of Henry Hudson*, John Collier's 1881 painting, I was mesmerized. There's something about Hudson's forlorn stare — a sense of profound hopelessness — that forces viewers to empathize with the doomed English explorer. Hudson's obsession with finding the fabled Northwest Passage proved to

be his undoing; set adrift in a small boat by mutineers, Hudson, his son John, and a handful of loyal crew members would disappear amid the ice floes of the bay that now bears his name.

In *God's Mercies*, Douglas Hunter explains in vivid detail how incompetent management, shipboard power struggles, and betrayals of friendships led Hudson's crew to abandon him to his death.

Hunter also deftly illustrates how Hudson's fate affected another of Canada's early explorers, the renowned Samuel de Champlain.

The "Father of New France" shared Hudson's dream of discovering the passage, without allowing it to destroy him. That's why, four hundred years later, we are celebrating Champlain's continuing legacy at Quebec City, while Hudson remains the pitiful caricature in Collier's painting, sitting at the tiller of his shallop, awaiting a rescue that will never come. — **M.R.**

Terrible Victory: First Canadian Army and the Scheldt Estuary Campaign
by Mark Zuehlke
Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver, 2007
560 pp., illus.,
$37.95 hardcover

Terrible Victory is the most recent work by Canadian military historian Mark Zuehlke. In September 1944, the Allied war engine was stalled on the German border as supply lines stretched across France and Belgium to the Normandy coastline. The Canadians were called upon to clear the Scheldt Estuary that guarded access to the already liberated port of Antwerp, which was desperately needed to supply Allied troops.

Zuehlke brings readers into the terrifying experience of Canadian soldiers slogging through the mud and wet of the Dutch polders, while providing the strategic con-

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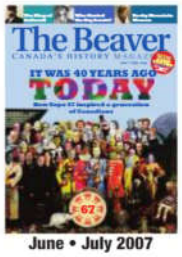

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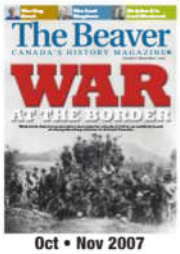

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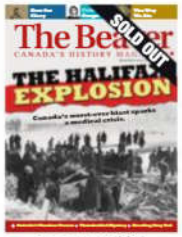

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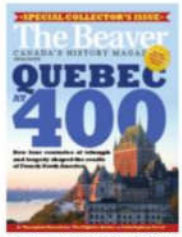

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text and importance of the battle before them.

The size and length of the Scheldt campaign test Zuehlke's style, which served so well through previous books on the shorter, localized battles of Ortona and Normandy. Nonetheless, *Terrible Victory* continues Zuehlke's impressive run of bringing to light Canada's most important contributions of the Second World War. — J.R.

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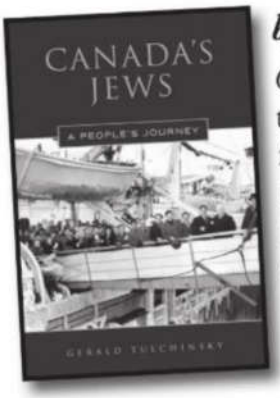

by Gerald Tulchinsky

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The Origins and Legacy of the Fight for Legal Personhood

by Robert J. Sharpe and Patricia I. McMahon

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Christopher Moore

Blissful thinking

Celebrated as both an intellectual and a pundit, Michael Bliss's main goal has always been "to write good history."

"I think there is very little theory in my writing," says Michael Bliss. "Philosophy convinced me that a lot of social theory is bunk. My work is very specific and grounded."

When I read in the recently published tribute volume *Essays in Honour of Michael Bliss* that Bliss's first studies were in philosophy, I wondered if that was the source of the clear views and strong principles that have distinguished him among recent historians of Canada. No, he said when we talked recently at University of Toronto's Massey College. What he retained from philosophy was mostly that resistance to grand theoretical interpretations.

Since the late 1960s, Michael Bliss has been a substantial presence among scholars of the history of Canada. He began in business history, most notably with his 1978 book, *A Canadian Millionaire*. This biography of Toronto entrepreneur Joseph Flavelle painted the late-nineteenth-century Canadian businessman as a country merchant who built a large industrial corporation and then moved into finance, banking, high society, and public life. Bliss even provided a kind of cliffhanger: how did the man who declared "to hell with profits" become a war profiteer? Bliss followed it with 1987's *Northern Enterprise*, an encyclopedic sweep across five centuries of Canadian business.

Meanwhile, he had detoured into medical history. He took up the story of insulin partly just for the sake of a story that needed to be reconstructed in intricate detail, "day by day, and dog by dog." *The Discovery of Insulin* (1982) became his best-known book, and medical history gradually became his principal historical work, yielding Plague: *A Story of Smallpox in Montreal* (1991) and three big biographies of doctors Frederick Banting, William Osler, and Harvey Cushing.

Michael Bliss

COURTESY OF MICHAEL BLISS

One lesson from these medical histories? Despite all our advances, Bliss writes, the twentieth-century turn to the secular meant a huge reduction in life expectancy: from eternity to less than a hundred years.

Michael Bliss sees himself as a "grounded" historian, trying to pursue human lives in all their existential uniqueness.

As a biographer, he admits to following Walt Whitman's injunction: to resurrect the dead, to stand them on their feet in all their human complexity.

This "tell it like it is" stance puts him, to say the least, out of step with the academic consensus — not something that has deterred Bliss much.

Bliss may be anti-theoretical in his historical writing, but much of his fame comes from the vigorous opinions in his op-ed columns and media commentary. For Bliss, who has criticized his own profession for its retreat into specialization

and minutiae, commentary became a way to keep history engaged with the big Canadian questions.

"My first job was to write good history," Bliss says of his commentary. "I think I have always discussed things in historical context." He denies being simply a conservative voice on public affairs, but might admit to being a contrarian. "The problem I had as a Canadian public intellectual was being expected to be a cheerleader for Canadian nationalism, was resisting the temptation of the money and the support that was always available for that. I wanted to resist that. I thought it was important to be able to ask any critical question, including 'why should the country continue in existence?'"

I saw one television talk piece he did recently, and he had lost none of that pungency. While the other guests parsed the politics of the Mulroney-Schreiber hearings, Bliss was clearly outraged at seeing political life and the office of prime minister so sullied, and he blazed with cold fury. Those moments are now rare: Bliss decided he would mostly give up punditry when he retired from the University of Toronto in 2006.

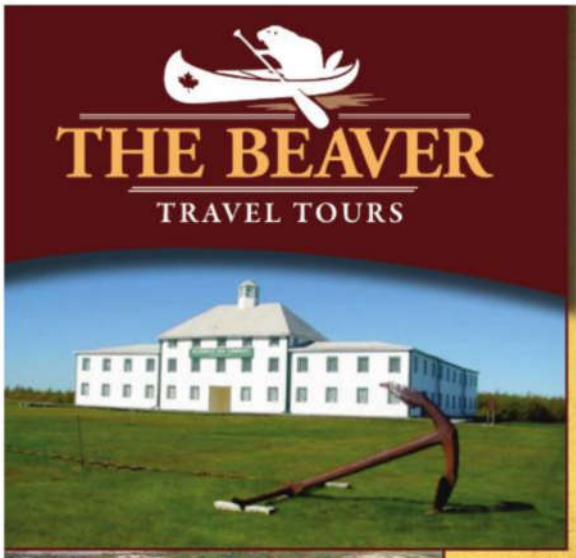
But his principles remain strong. We happened to be talking on the day in March 2008 when Conrad Black began his jail term, and as we left Massey College we encountered John Fraser, the college's master. A lifelong friend and sometime employee of Black's, Fraser gave us the latest news on Black's pre-jail mood. "I never thought it would come to this," he said.

As we left the college, Bliss admitted he had always thought it would come to precisely this. As an acquaintance of Black's, he had been sounded out about a letter of support for the beleaguered businessman — and had declined.

> Michael Bliss sees himself as a "grounded" historian, trying to pursue human lives in all their existential uniqueness.

Essays in Honour of Michael Bliss: Figuring the Social, a volume of essays organized by Bliss's former doctoral students and edited by E.A. Heaman, Alison Li, and Shelley McKellar, was published by University of Toronto Press in March 2008.

Christopher Moore comments in every issue of *The Beaver*.



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HEARTLAND

Gimli, Manitoba, is home to an annual Icelandic Festival, which features re-enactments of Viking battles.

SUN MEDIA CORP.

Prairie Vikings

Joel Ralph and Jessie Klassen discover the charms of Manitoba's "New Iceland."

Distinctively Manitoban with a maritime twist, the "Republic of New Iceland" is a unique Canadian cultural community nestled on the western shores of Lake Winnipeg. Our getaway took us north from Winnipeg to celebrate and share the stories of the Icelandic settlers who arrived more than a century ago.

The first group of 285 Icelandic settlers arrived near present-day Gimli, Manitoba, in October 1875. Exhausted from the journey across the Great Lakes and then up the Red River, they carried all their personal possessions and enough supplies to establish a new community and see them through the winter. During their first night, they were greeted by a gentle snowfall, an ominous warning of the winter and struggles ahead.

As we stared out at the tranquil waters of Lake Winnipeg in the summer, it was hard to imagine the conditions the newcomers from Iceland faced that first winter. To help us understand, we stopped at the New Icelandic Heritage Museum in Gimli. The exhibits carefully document travel from Iceland via Scotland and England to Canada. Personal narratives bring out the deep dedication to establishing Icelandic culture in North America, religious differences which divided the early colony, and the struggle of everyday life in the settlement.

Islendingadagurinn, the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, takes over Gimli every August long weekend. One of the largest and longest-running cultural celebrations in Canada, the festival treats guests to Icelandic food, poetry, singing, and dancing. "Viking battle re-enactments with traditional costumes," are the highlights of the weekend, according to Shelley Narfasson, executive director of the festival.

Pulling ourselves away from the excitement of Gimli, we headed north to explore the life of the early Icelanders. The community they founded — the fledgling Republic of New Iceland — was an autonomous region, outside of Manitoba's early boundaries. The colony adopted its own provisional constitution and held elections.

The hospitality of the area is not lost on the visitor. Just outside of nearby Riverton, at Integrity Foods, we were welcomed with a warm handshake to the weekly pizza night. As local residents

gathered to discuss news and events, we picked our ingredients from the garden and handed them over to be prepared for our fire-baked pizza.

Full from our dinner, we passed across the causeway to Hecla Provincial Park. Setting up camp beside a warm fire — still snacking on ginger snaps from the bakery — we watched the stars come out, shining perhaps as brightly as they did when the first settlers arrived.

In the morning we carried our breakfast down to Gull Harbour and enjoyed the peace and tranquility of the beach, warmed by the rising sun. This was our day to explore Hecla Island and the community that once called it home.

Hecla Village is a well-preserved community showcasing early twentieth-century life in Canada. It's more reminiscent of the Maritimes than Manitoba farm fields. On this day, the *Blue Streak* and other fishing boats lined the shore. Fishing was always integral to life on Hecla, and the fish station still offers a good history of the industry, demonstrations, and, of course, fresh samples.

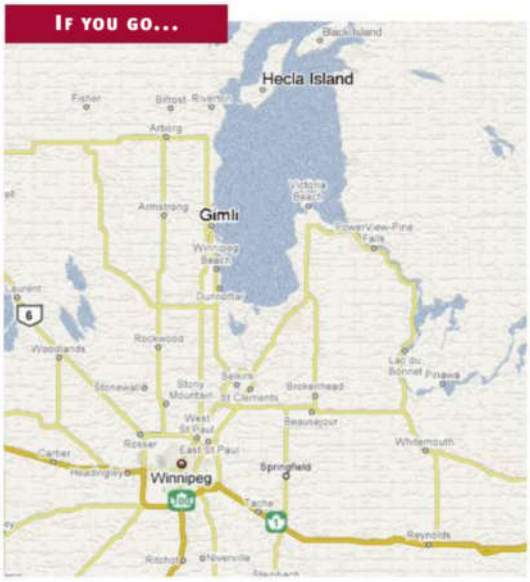
We walked the self-guided tour and stopped at the Hecla Village Museum, which transports visitors back to the 1920s, '30s and '40s, when life on the island was at its height.

Minding the museum this day was Gladys Kjartanson, who was born in the village. Standing on the porch of her uncle's home, she reminisced with us about life before the causeway. She remembers ten-hour ferry rides to Winnipeg and early Christmas concerts in the Hecla community hall, located just two doors down. "Hecla (Village) is so well-kept as a park and so many people enjoy it. Without the park, it probably would have worn down."

From the museums and beaches of Gimli to the historic village on Hecla Island, the Republic of New Iceland offers a memorable and historic journey.

Joel Ralph and Jessie Klassen are intrepid explorers of Canada's historic sites and provincial parks. They are currently discovering their newly adopted province of Manitoba.

If you go...



MICHEL GIROUEAU

From Winnipeg, follow Highway 9 north about 90 kilometres, through historic St. Andrews, Lockport and Selkirk, to Gimli. Follow Highway 222 north through Arnes and along the lake to Riverton. Hecla Village is another 50 km north along Highway 8.

New Iceland Heritage Museum
#108 — 94 1st Avenue
Gimli, Manitoba
T: (204) 642-4001
W: nihm.ca
E: nihm@mts.net

Solmundson Gesta Hus
Hecla Provincial Park
Riverton, Manitoba
T: (204) 279-2088
W: heclatourism.mb.ca/solmundson.htm

Hecla Tourism Association
T: (204) 279-2088
W: heclatourism.mb.ca
E: hecla@mts.net

Icelandic Festival of Manitoba
T: (204) 642-7417
W: icelandicfestival.com
E: icefest@mts.net

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2146 Place Dublin, Montreal (Quebec) H3K 2A2
Information: 514 935-8136
www.maisonsaint-gabriel.qc.ca
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Your Story

Salute to Vimy Ridge Farm

'Who was here before me?' wondered Merle Massie as she uncovered the hidden treasures of her newly purchased farmland. The answer astonished her.

My husband and I bought some farmland three years ago. It is pretty land, nestled in the Bear Hills of west-central Saskatchewan. Still, I considered it a business transaction — money exchanged for the chance to expand our farming enterprise.

But while walking the home quarter, I fell in love. Treasures abounded in the grass and lay hidden in the beautiful pine and spruce shelter belt. A wagon, its front wheel intertwined with the base of a tree, lent a sense of history. A hidden orchard survives, overgrown with grass and littered with broken branches, but with a few twisted apple trees still offering sweet fruit.

To the north of the yard is a commanding hill, hosting a phenomenal panoramic view of the prairies in a fifty-mile swing from east to southwest — not quite as impressive as the Cypress Hills, but close. On the apex, a cairn of rocks supports a lopsided hollow metal post — all that remains of a flagpole. Touching the pocked metal, I'm brought up short by a sudden realization — someone else was here before me.

I set out to find my homesteader.

I knew his name — Albert Kessel — but not much more. I wanted what every historian wants: to know about his life — what he read, his passions, his interests, his hobbies. I hit the jackpot at our two local museums in Biggar and Rosetown.

In Rosetown, I was shocked to discover that Kessel was considered a leading citizen. His stature was such that the archive had compiled a short biography. The archivist said, "Oh. You're interested in Albert Kessel? Come to the back." Ranged along the top of the cabinets and spilling onto the floor were tarnished trophies of every size, shape, and colour.

"What are all these?" I asked. "Curling trophies?"

The archivist laughed. "No. Every time Kessel won an award, he got a trophy. Ribbons, too."

Albert Kessel was a master grain grower.

MERLE MASSIE

"Awards for what?" I said, baffled.

"Grain. He was a master grain grower. Look."

I looked. The sheer number of dusty trophies was overwhelming, proclaiming outstanding success at agricultural fairs such as Rosetown, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Toronto's Royal Winter Fair, and, Chicago — the apex of grain growing. If you win at Chicago, you are declared king.

At a time when wheat dominated the Saskatchewan landscape, Kessel went his own way, growing specialty grains and winning championships for barley, rye, and flax, as well as wheat. Sources vary, but it seems that between 1947 and 1967, when his health started to fail, Kessel won no less than three World Rye King titles, at least one World Flax King title, and many local, regional, and national championships. Sitting in the archives, among the flotsam of his wildly successful agricultural career, I read about Kessel's life.

Albert Kessel was born in 1895 in Chicago, the son of an immigrant Czechoslovakian stonecutter. An uncle in North Dakota raised Kessel following the death of his mother. When the time came to strike out on his own, Albert came north to Canada to search for a homestead.

He came to Marriott, halfway between Biggar and Rosetown, in 1910. His brother Tony joined him and they homesteaded side-by-side. However, Albert Kessel's farming career was sidetracked — and nearly ended — by the First World War. According to the local history book of Harris, Saskatchewan, Albert had "an unlucky romance" that resulted in him signing on as a soldier. Another local history, *Our Czech Heritage*, wrote "The Klamath hall was first built in 1915.... This date is well remembered, as Albert Kessel had enlisted in the army and he walked to the hall dressed in his uniform, but came in his bare feet." The history book is vague — why would he go to the hall (presumably to a dance) in no shoes? Was it a bet? To protest his "unlucky romance?" Or did his new soldier's boots simply hurt his feet?

Albert served as a bugler, but his army career was short: he was shot through the thigh at Vimy Ridge in early 1917.

Discharged, he returned to Canada. Gradually, his leg improved, and he took a twelve-month course in field husbandry at the University of Saskatchewan (part of the rehabilitation effort for returned soldiers). Taking a soldier's land grant next to his homestead, Albert set out to build his farm into an agricultural paradise.

Vimy Ridge Farm (as Albert called it) became, in the words of one Regina newspaper reporter, "quite a mecca for researchers and experiments in fruit growing, as well as grain, have been conducted there." As a registered seed grower, experimenter, and master farmer, his annual farm field day brought in as many as 400 researchers from the University of Saskatchewan, federal experimental farms, and the Searle Grain Company.

Albert was a perfectionist. His experimental growing plots were selected, isolated, and seeded carefully to allow for hand-weeding. The final crop was cut with a scythe and tied into small bundles, and then hung from nails in the blackened barn — Albert had boarded over the windows — to finish ripening away from the sun. Then, it was hand-threshed by flail and sorted kernel by kernel, using a magnifying glass. Only the best would make it into his grain show samples and seed grower experiments.

However time-consuming this process, it worked. His fame grew. In the *Globe and Mail*, he was described as "the garlic-chewing prairie farmer." Perhaps that description explains why he was also usually referred to as "the bachelor farmer."

When Kessel died in November 1971 from complications relating to diabetes, the Biggar Museum Board was just forming. Albert's household effects and personal items were the first artifacts tagged and stored by the museum. What a treasure for me as a historian: sorting through the files, I could visualize his home, his possessions, and his life.

Climbing the north hill with my next-door neighbours (my mother- and father-in-law) I wondered — did this hill remind Albert of Vimy Ridge? Is that why he called his farm Vimy Ridge Farm? Did he ever blow his bugle up here? We stopped at the cairn of rocks, the broken flagpole bereft. My father-in-law, Ron Massie, turned to me. "Did you know, Merle, Albert Kessel used to stump up this hill every day and raise the Union Jack? Every day. Sometimes when I drive by, I think of that. And I miss it."

One day, we'll raise the flag again. We'll do it for tenacious Saskatchewan homesteaders; for unlucky romances; for Great War and Vimy Ridge veterans; for excellence in prairie agriculture; and, for garlic-chewing bachelor farmers.

Merle Massie is a Western Canadian historian living in Biggar, Saskatchewan, where she is at work on her PhD, chronicling the history of the forest fringe region of the province.

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Photo Contest
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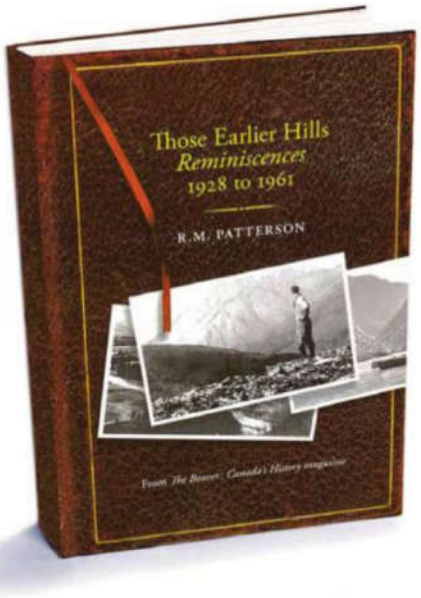
Contest closes on June 10, 2008. Winning entries will be published in The Beaver. Entries can be submitted online to contest@thebeaver.ca or by regular post, at The Beaver Photo Contest, 478-167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 0T6. Submissions will NOT be returned, so please mail duplicates of your photos.
www.getolympus.ca

Recommended Reading

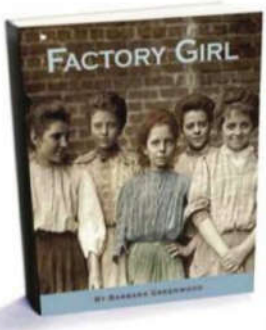
A percentage of all sales goes to supporting History Society programs including the Pierre Berton Award and the Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History.

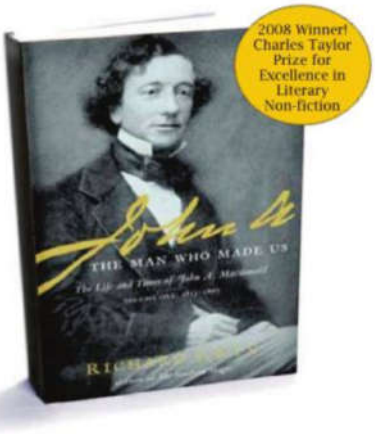


Those Earlier Hills: *Reminiscences* 1928-1960
by R.M. Patterson
R.M. Patterson's books have been kept in print because his memorable descriptions of Canada's wild places, especially the remote Nahanni country, won him generations of admiring readers around the world. *Those Earlier Hills* now presents the articles he wrote for *The Beaver: Canada's History Magazine*, in a lively and evocative collection that will delight Patterson fans old and new. **Price: $24.95**

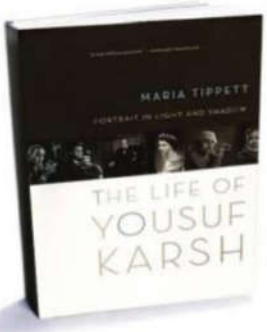
KCLUB APPROVED!

Factory Girl
by Barbara Greenwood
Rarely seen archival photos accompany this fictionalized story. Through the eyes of its main character, Emily, it centres on the life of working children in North American cities in the early part of the 20th century. **Price: $22.95**

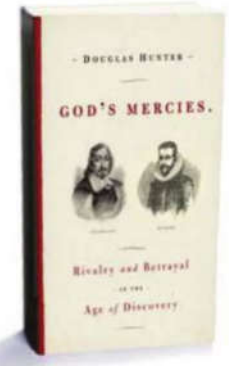




John A.: The Man Who Made Us, Volume One, 1815-1867
by Richard Gwyn
Colourful and intensely human, Macdonald was beyond question Canada's most important prime minister. This volume describes how Macdonald developed Canada's first true national political party, encompassing French and English and occupying the centre of the political spectrum. **Price: $37.00**



Portrait in Light and Shadow: The Life of Yousuf Karsh
by Maria Tippett
Illustrated throughout with black-and-white images from the artist's life and work, this book includes his iconic photographs of Winston Churchill, Queen Elizabeth II, Albert Einstein, George Bernard Shaw, Ernest Hemingway, Pope Pius XII, Nikita Khrushchev, Pablo Picasso, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau. **Price: $39.95**



God's Mercies: Rivalry and Betrayal
by Douglas Hunter
A searing historical work about death, deceit and dishonour, and the rivalry between Samuel de Champlain and Henry Hudson — two of the greatest explorers of the 17th century. **Price: $34.95**

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News from Canada's National History Society

History Matters

Canada's National History Society
publisher of **The Beaver** *Canada's History Magazine* and
Kayak *Canada's History Magazine for Kids*

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Founded in 1994 to popularize Canadian history, the work of Canada's National History Society includes **The Beaver**, **Kayak**, the **Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History** to honour the country's best history teachers, and the **Pierre Berton Award** to recognize those who have brought history to a wider audience.

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The Beaver was founded in 1920 by the Hudson's Bay Company, whose commitment to the History Society and its programs continues today through the ***Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation***.

History Society Annual Report 2007

DEBORAH MORRISON

Beaver **Editor Mark Reid hand delivers copies of** ***Le Beaver*** **to La maison de la presse internationale magazine store in Quebec City's historic Old Town.**

Our regular readers may have noticed *The Beaver*'s transformation over the past few years. The special Quebec 400th Anniversary issue — the largest one we've produced in our history — has truly raised the bar for our flagship magazine. Our editorial team, led by Editor Mark Reid, continues to delight readers (and *The Beaver*'s publisher) with their enthusiasm and dedication. But what you've seen on these pages tells only half the story of recent developments within the History Society.

Deborah Morrison

With its current roster of web programming, new resources for teachers, a new grant program for local history projects, and the continued growth of its new children's magazine, *Kayak*, it's hard to think back to five years ago when none of these programs existed. In 2007, most of these investments in new programs started to bear fruit.

This edition of History Matters is devoted to highlighting some of those investments and paying tribute to those who have contributed so profoundly to our success. For those of you who have already taken the decision to become active members in the History Society and support our efforts through an annual donation — thank you! This past year we increased the number of annual donors by two percent.

For those of you who still think of us mostly as just one of your favourite magazines, we appreciate your support and hope this report will give you a better understanding of the other ways the History Society is attempting to reach out to new audiences. We remain committed to our mission of promoting greater popular interest in Canadian history, and encourage you to join us in our journey.

— Deborah Morrison,
President and CEO

MARIANNE HELM

Reaching out to readers

The Beaver

In October 2007, *The Globe and Mail* proclaimed *The Beaver* one of the "best reads" on the newsstand.

It was an important moment for *The Beaver* — and a milestone achievement for the new editorial team.

And while our August/September issue featuring a special package on "The Worst Canadians" may have garnered national headlines, for the staff, the major editorial focus of 2007 was working on our special Quebec 400th Anniversary issue, which is on newsstands now.

The Quebec issue is our largest issue yet, and marks the first time in the magazine's history that *The Beaver* has published in both English and French.

It also brings together historians and history writers from both English and French Canada to celebrate the foundation of Quebec — and Canada — 400 years ago.

The issue is selling remarkably well on the newsstand and is setting the pace for another record-breaking year of single-copy sales in 2008.

The Beaver team is also in the process of revitalizing and enhancing its website, TheBeaver.ca.

The site now features podcasts, interactive stories, contests, quizzes, and more.

Meanwhile, our book reviews section has been bolstered by a partnership with McNally Robinson booksellers.

To purchase a book from the store, simply go to our website, TheBeaver.ca, and choose your selection.

Kayak

Like most magazines in Canada, the first five years for *Kayak* are the most critical — and the most challenging. With limited potential for advertising revenues, and limited resources to market and promote the magazine for new subscriptions, its progress has been steady, but slow. Although we are still not operating at break-even, we're pleased with our progress; *Kayak* is now published in two languages and reaches a dedicated audience of more than 35,000 Canadian families and schools.

Kayak's initial start-up was generously supported by the TD Bank Financial Group, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Richardson Foundation, the Weston Foundation, and Transcontinental Printing. In addition, Hbc History Foundation made a special investment in the French edition — distributed as a free insert five times a year to the 26,000 subscribers of *Les Débrouillards*, a Quebec-based children's science magazine.

This past year the Society made several improvements in the editorial package: moving to a thematic approach for every issue, stronger content links to curriculum; and increasing the actual size of the magazine.

Great West Life is supporting KIT, a new bilingual, bi-monthly electronic newsletter for teachers that delivers teaching ideas, web links, and other useful information about ways *Kayak* can be used in classrooms.

These investments have paid off. Within the past year, *Kayak*'s paid English circulation has grown by an astonishing fifty percent. As well, *Kayak* received its first ever awards — a Children's Book Centre 2007 Our Choice citation and, in April, a prestigious 2008 Parent's Choice Award-Silver Honour. In the coming year, the History Society will engage in a significant redesign of *Kayak*'s website to create more opportunities for children to share and exchange comments about *Kayak*.

If you haven't taken a look at *Kayak* lately, call us to request a free sample copy. It truly is bigger and better than before!

Reaching out to teachers

History Forum

Just over ten years ago, the History Society joined with many other Canadians in advocating to restore history as a core part of the curriculum in our schools. Back then, only two provinces included a compulsory history course.

To help resolve the problem, the History Society established the Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History. The goals of the program are to recognize teachers who are teaching well, and to inspire other teachers. Today, that program has honoured more than 200 teacher finalists and award recipients. Examples of their teaching strategies are freely available through historysociety.ca.

In November, the History Society hosted its first ever National Forum on Canadian History. Attended by the Governor General, generously funded by TD Bank Financial Group, and hosted by Carleton University, the event brought together three of Canada's leading academic experts on the teaching of history. It attracted more than 250 students, teachers, historians, and public history advocates from across Canada.

YVES PROVENCHER

Rose Fine-Meyer was one of six teachers honoured at the 2007 Governor General's Awards ceremony last November in Ottawa. The recipients also received a standing ovation from Members of Parliament when they attended Question Period.

They came together specifically to talk about ways of working toward a common framework for history education. Most of the classroom teachers in the audience were intrigued to learn how they might be able to formally share curriculum strategies and teaching resources with other jurisdictions.

We learned through their presenta-

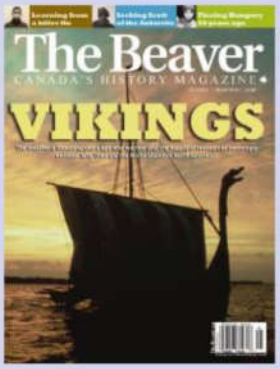
Outreach Highlights

» The History Society attends social studies teachers conferences in Ontario, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Alberta, reaching more than 2,000 history educators.

» Over 2,000 elementary school teachers subscribe to KIT (*Kayak* Information for Teachers).

» 740 secondary teachers subscribe to BITE (*Beaver* Information for Teachers and Educators).

» The History Society sponsors the Canadian Historical Association's annual meeting in June 2008. It also partnered in a number of other initiatives, including regional Historica Heritage Fairs, and the Young Aboriginal Writer's Contest.



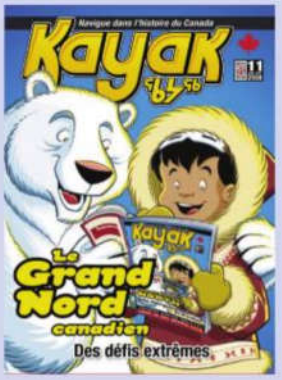
The Beaver Highlights

» The Dec 06 / Jan 07 issue of *The Beaver: Vikings*, wins the Society's first ever National Newsstand Award.

» Four of the six *Beaver* issues produced in 2007 set new records for sales on the newsstand.

» McNally Robinson and the History Society enter a new partnership to provide special online pricing for *The Beaver*-reviewed books and other History Society Book Club selections.

» History Society and Heritage House Publishing enter into an agreement to publish a book collection of *The Beaver* articles, featuring the work of R.M. Patterson in *Those Earlier Hills*.



Kayak Highlights

» Doubled circulation base.

» Delivered to French readers through *Les Débrouillards*.

» Included in Children's Book Centre 2007 Our Choice listings.

History Society by the Numbers

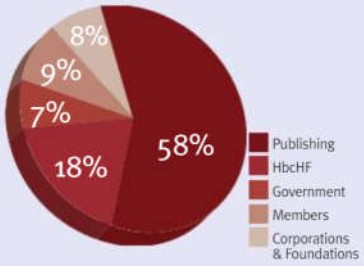
$2,423,440
Total Expenditures by The Society

47,900
Members of The Society

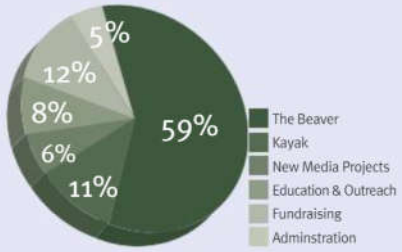
11%
Program Expenditures for Kayak

5%
Administrative Expenditures

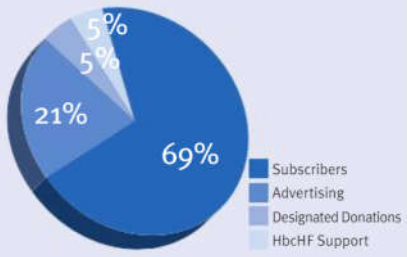
2007 History Society Revenue Sources



2007 History Society Expenditures



For every dollar spent at The Beaver



STEVE GOULIN

Governor General Michaëlle Jean speaks at the National History Forum in Ottawa.

tions that there has indeed been a lot of groundwork covered over the past decade. All but two of Canada's provincial departments of education have undertaken significant revisions to their history and social studies curricula during this time, and most of them are still in the early phases of implementing the changes.

We're optimistic that the goal of a truly national history education has never been more attainable. THEN/HiER, a pan-Canadian history education network of academics, classroom teachers, and public history organization leaders established by two of the presenters at the National History Forum has just received confirmation of seven years of funding to continue working toward developing the common framework.

The History Society will be a partner in that project, and it will continue to use the National History Forum to foster an even larger public engagement in the discussion. To read the history forum presentations, visit the education section of our website, HistorySociety.ca.

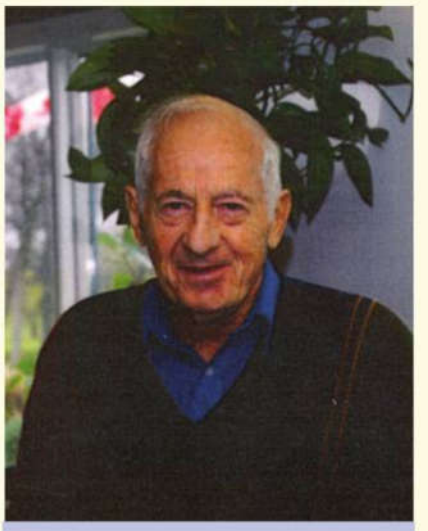
Community outreach

HBC Local History Grant Program

Launched in the spring of 2007, the Hbc Local History Grant Program is helping history projects flourish across Canada. Hbc generously donated $50,000 for the program, and the History Society provided the program coordination.

The Society is very pleased with the positive response; requests for new and unique projects poured in from across the country. Some of the successful projects included republishing the first map of Victoria, originally created by Sir James Douglas in July 1842, and purchasing new costumes for interpreters at the Dartmouth Heritage Museum.

Happily, Hbc has doubled its funding for 2008 to $100,000. We are eager to help more community history projects get off the ground.



We gratefully acknowledge the generous gift of artwork received from well-known Manitoba sculptor Leonard Kahane. This is the first gift of artwork donated to the History Society. His two pieces of granite sculpture will be used for future fund-raising purposes.

There are a number of ways members can help support the History Society beyond their annual donation. In addition to donations of artwork, or gifts of stocks and marketable securities, members may choose to make bequests and other planned gifts. We also partner with Aeroplan each year to receive transfers of unused accumulated points to support the travel of our recipients to the Governor General's Awards.

Financial report

The History Society's financial position remained stable over the past year. There was a slight decline in revenues due to lower than anticipated advertising sales and a shortfall in projected corporate and foundation support. These reductions were offset by cost reductions in programs to close the year with a slight deficit of $3,000.

Despite the limited growth in revenues, management was able to use existing resources to introduce a number of new program components in both its publishing and education and outreach operations.

In addition to the editorial enhancements to both *Kayak* and *The Beaver*, the History Society began what will be a three-year capital investment in a major restructuring of its websites and online presence. Donations from individual members of the History Society continue to be the key to our success.

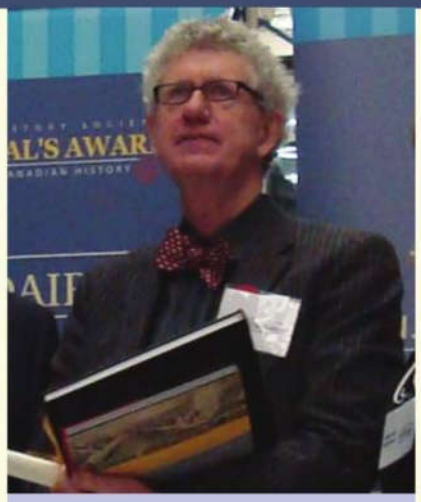
Individual gifts to the History Society rose by two percent. Overall, History Society members contribute sixty-six percent of our annual budget through subscription fees and annual donations. We extend our heartfelt thanks for your continued support.

Coming Up...

The History Society is pleased to announce two new initiatives for 2008: *The Beaver* Travel Tours will offer members of the History Society exclusive travel opportunities to unique historic destinations.

Three tours are presented for August — a Northern Ontario Rail Tour offered in partnership with Rail Travel Tours, and two trips to visit remote Fur Trade history sites in Northern Manitoba presented with Heartland Travel.

The History Society will also be partnering in the presentation of the Vigil Project — 1914–1918, a national tribute to remember Canada's 68,000 fallen soldiers.



In a special presentation, the Pierre Berton Award was handed out at Rideau Hall in November 2007. The 2007 Award recipient was film director Brian McKenna, whose *Great War Project* was profiled in *The Beaver* last April/May. Brian McKenna was recently interviewed by *The Beaver*'s editorial staff, and a podcast of the interview can be found at thebeaver.ca.

The live vigil will be broadcast from the National War Memorial. It will include an online educational component so that families and classrooms can actively participate in the event.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY!
Bryce Hall at The University of Winnipeg will become the new home for The Beaver and Canada's National History Society in the fall of 2008 - a partnership that will further provide a gateway to research in Canadian History.
THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG
www.uwinnipeg.ca
CANADA'S HISTORY SOCIETY
The Beaver

Canada's National History Society 2007

Honour Roll

Thank You.

Each year, Canada's National History Society makes an appeal for annual donations to support its current programs and the development of new ones. These annual funds provide stability for our core programs and enable the History Society to seize unexpected opportunities. This year's fundraising efforts realized a total of $1,007,652 in charitable contributions from our members, corporations, foundations, and Provincial and Federal governments. The History Society extends a special thanks to all of our donors for their generosity. Gifts of $50 or more have been recognized in this Honour Roll.

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Album

Murray Gibbs and Liz Gibbs-Otteson are the son and daughter of Yetive Gibbs (Gourlay). They live in Versoix, Switzerland, and Calgary, Alberta, respectively.

A sailing we will go

What could be more idyllic than to go sailing on a balmy summer day? Gretchen Gourlay lived in Toronto in 1921 when this picture was taken. She is shown here with her daughter Yetive; both had just spent a pleasant afternoon on Lake Huron. Our contributors recall how their mother, dressed in the appropriate beach garb of the time, would spend several weeks at the summer house of her great-uncle, George Wedd, in Port Franks, Ontario. Gretchen was married to a land surveyor — Robert Gourlay. When her husband was gone for extended periods of time on surveying parties in the north, she would pack up the family and spend relaxing summers on the Lake Huron shore. As Yetive grew older, she and her mother would join her father on his surveys in Northwestern Ontario. In 1926 the family moved to Alberta, and the days spent on the lake would become a warm, pleasant memory. Turning ninety-three in September, Yetive Gibbs (Gourlay) still lives in Calgary. This picture hangs in her home in what the family calls the "heritage" room.

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in Canada's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied (please don't send priceless originals) and mail it to Album, c/o *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. Or email your submission to album@thebeaver.ca. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your posted submission returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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It might have been the company or it might have been the lobster. All I know is I've never laughed that hard before or since.

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